1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

able to find their way back, settled in the mountains of Kürdistan.'

The two above described classes of Kürds are distinguished among themselves by terms signifying respectively, "Dwellers in tents," or "Nomads," and "Labourers," or "Subjects" (*Rayahs*).

The present Kürds are said to outnumber the warriors in the proportion of four or five to one. The latter are estimated at some thirteen thousand families, of whom ten thousand are nomad, the remainder being settled in the towns and villages. All these warrior Kürds are divided into tribes, of which they distinguish three kinds: *eshiré* (great tribes), *gushlik* (medium tribes), and *ilchi* (small tribes). These are counted by tents or houses, each of which contains from five to twenty inmates. The great tribes are subdivided into *gushlik* and *ilchi*, or merely into *ilchi*, which term is also generally used to denote a tribe, whether great or small. The small tribes which are unconnected with an *eshiré* are called isolated *ilchi*.

The tribe, or clan, consist of the family of the chief, and a number of other families more or less closely connected with it. In their encampments the tent of the chief is conspicuous among the others by its size, for it is the council chamber, court of justice, and general meeting-place of the elders of the tribe, and in it general hospitality is exercised. Clan feeling and devotion to the chief are the leading characteristics of these wild people. The head of the tribe is, however, not an arbitrary ruler, the voice of the

[1] Rhodes, *An Abridgment, or Chronicle, &c.*, p. 100.

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1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1888) 1891
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630
631 elders having great weight, and, as I shall subse-
632 quently point out, even the women are not excluded
from a share in the politics of the tribe.

175 Though more or less dominated by the numerous
176 conquerors who have successively, for three thousand
years, overrun those regions which are now called
Kurdistan, the Kurds have never ceased to own a
distinct nationality. Since the Ottoman conquest
they have been constantly wavering between the two
rival powers of Islam—the Sunnis and the Shias, as
represented by the Turks and the Persians respectively,
siding, according to the exigencies of the time, now
with one party and now with the other. Notwith-
722 standing their sufferings in the destructive wars of
649 conquest waged for centuries by Turk and Persian,
176 and the constant internal feuds fomented by both
those nations in order to weaken the power of the
Kurdish warriors, they still maintain a sort of semi-
independence, preserving their nationality as distinct
from that of their neighbours as in earlier days,
though possessing no dynasty, political constitution,
ancient religion, historical traditions, or literature, to
bind them together.

667 Three times during the present century have
national aspirations incited them to throw off the
Turkish yoke; but owing to the immense extent of
mountainous country over which they are scattered,
their successes have been but partial and ungatory.
181 Representatives as they probably are of the ancient
179 Chaldeans, no other race has, perhaps, so long pre-
served its nationality under conditions so unfavourable.

II

At the head of the executive branch of government, subject, of course, to legislative or royal check, are the ministers, from whose various departments all public officers are appointed. Following in general the old Ottoman lines, the country is divided into fourteen livas, each under a mutesarif. The liva is subdivided into qadhas, each under a kaimmaqam. The qadha is in turn subdivided into a number of nahiyas, each under a mudir. Large towns have a belediye municipality appointed by the government whose office is responsible for the intricacies of metropolitan administration. The people have a mukhtar, selected from the local inhabitants, who, while in no sense a public official, acts in liaison between his fellows and the mudir, a role exactly comparable to that of the 'umda in contemporary Egypt.[1]

The qadha or district of Rowanduz belongs to the Erbil liva, and is subdivided into five nahiyas. The sedentary population of these, as well as the number of villages, is listed here for 1950, as furnished by the census officer of Rowanduz. In spite of this official's labors in resolving a difficult problem, it is necessary to regard these figures with some reservation, for the Kurds, like many of their contemporaries in the Middle East and like the Israelites of old, regard inquiries into their numbers with the strongest suspicion. Similarly, the "villages" here referred to may vary from a few isolated

[1] Agresti, 1945, pp. 47-48.

and lords. The Kurdish shepherds and herdsmen of northern Iraq cannot be said to belong to this group. Although the matter requires more exact study, they live in symbiotic relationship with certain larger groups of sedentary farmers with whom they have definite economic and social ties, these last usually tribal or, at least, a common overlordship. It seems very much as though a real division of labour were involved, certain of the group being devoted to move the flocks of the whole with the change of seasons, but the historical background of this interdependence is more complex. It is, for example, uncertain whether or not the Kurdish people as a whole were once nomadic in some restricted sense, one author holding that the word "Kurd" itself was in Medieval days but a generic term for rough wanderers.[1] However the development may have taken place, there is abundant evidence that the hetahir, with their mobility and firepower (the sword of the Middle East emphasizes weapons to a much greater extent than the agriculturist), exercised until quite recently extensive dominance over the settled folk while quite inferior to them in numbers. The Kurdish chieftains, the old powers of the land, are in many cases associated with hetahir groups, perhaps belonging directly among them, although as landowners they need not follow the migrations. It should further be remembered that a small number of herdsmen can account for

[1]Bamberg, 1911, p. 254.

Unlike many Kurdish and Nestorian villagers, as well as the people of Ruwanduz itself, the Jutaliq all belong to one or another "tribe" (Kurdish, 'ashiret, from Arabic, 'ashira), a matter which also demands clarification. The typical Kurdish tribe contains several elements of a different character. Membership usually depends upon descent, but individual families or much larger groups can change their tribal allegiance, and either join another group, or form an individual tribe of their own. While some of the larger confederations appear to be of considerable antiquity, the smaller groups come and go with the vicissitudes of war, wealth, and leadership. Nor are the tribes made up exclusively of nomads, for, while the nomad may play a dominant role in furnishing pugnacious leadership and armed men, the wealth and numerical strength of such a group come largely from its villagers. Because many of the chieftains are landowners, persons living in villages owned by them, whether Muslim Kurds or Nestorian Christians, are said to "belong" to the chieftain's tribe. Nestorians often dress in the typical garb of their "tribe," taking part in many of its common affairs, although there is almost no possibility of intermarriage between them and their Muslim fellows. While there seems to be little historical evidence to support or refute such a view, the Kurdish tribe appears to represent an intermediate stage between groups whose membership was actually based on descent and those whose character is purely feudal, a situation which may have

Batutsi and Bilima from remote villages--every in an a cloth-covered Queue for their long-winded depositions. In the event that a chieftain has appeared, usually to palliate any offense which may have taken place within his grounds or to vouch for a suspect, the little shebleng or tea-shop across from the government building is full of his body-guards, and a current of excitement runs through the town.

Those tribes having connections in the Ruwanfun district, while not necessarily confined to it, include the Bahati under Mulla Wuse Agha, the Barwiret under Mahmud Beg Khalifa Gould, the Barti under Fetah Agha, the Bavrti under Hajji Hamy Agha, the Bhayleni under Bulla Agha, the Bamni under Mahammed Seyidi, the Bajiati under Fetah Agha, and the Barshi under Kadir Agha. The most important and numerous are the Bahati, the Barwiret, the Barti, and the Barshi. Most of these have a network of lesser divisions, corresponding usually to lesser chieftains. It will be seen later that a chieftain need have no connection with a tribe to enjoy the rank. There are, to be sure, two views of the names of tribes and their leaders, that of the government and that of the local inhabitants. The list given here is that officially furnished by the seiks of Ruwanfun, and does not necessarily correspond with some segments of local opinion, for, on the one hand, certain "lawful" chieftains may be exiled, imprisoned, or unrecognized, while others, such as Ja'at Agha who keeps to a well-guarded house in Ruwanfun, are unable to return to their villages because of a feud.

because of a feud. Lastly it remains to mention the Barzani, formerly one of the most powerful groups in the district. In the series of events which followed the withdrawal of the Russian army from Azerbaijan in 1946, one of the Barzani chieftains, Mulla Mustafa, was forced to flee to the Armenian S.S.R. and the tribe was theoretically broken up. Officially the Barzani no longer exist, but in the popular mind they are much alive. If a policeman or another is shot in a remote district, the deed is usually attributed to "the Barzani," a convenient testimony for the gendarme's court. 622 619

The administrative control of an extensive mountainous area inhabited by a scattered population of some 35,000 poverty-stricken farmers and shepherds, most of whom belong to an ethnic group noted for its unruliness, is not without its difficulties, and requires of the gendarmerie and his officials the extensive daily exhibition of qualities, among them unlimited patience and a fine sense for popular opinion, rarely demanded of similar magistrates in Europe or North America. Locally, in the police, the greater part of the burden rests almost completely with the mufti and his several assistants, for within his own sphere he is given much of a free rein. It has been often and widely noticed that bureaucratic personnel in the Middle East far tend to endanger and submerge the requirements of efficiency, but this is valid only for capitals and larger towns, for the distasteful tasks of rural order find but the barest of notice. The 617 618

The town of Rwanda, as has been noted, has a popula- 621
tion of some 3,000 persons, the constitution of which shall 623
be dealt with later. A town of this size qualifies as a
municipality (ikoshi, bwiriza) and the paramount of Rwanda
occupies, in addition to his own office, that of mwiru 622
bwiriza, a position similar to that of an American mayor,
save that it is appointive rather than elective. Normally
the mwiru bwiriza in Irag has a headquarters, comparable to
the American city hall, and a staff of his own, including 624
a treasurer and other officials. In Rwanda, however, there
has not been any particular need for the institution of such
a separate body, and "metropolitan" administrative require-
ments are met through chiefs or district facilities.

The problems presented by town administration appear 625
to be very slight. Public order is maintained by the
traffic-police and minor violations of the civil code (few of
the townspeople have recourse to "tribal law") as well as 627
legal processes are handled directly by the judge. In 624
comparison with the outlying districts, the town is rela-
tively law-abiding, aside from a certain amount of juvenile
pilfering. Quarrels among women are quite frequent, the 579
cause most often a fight between their children. Such
altercations begin with words ("prostitute" is a favorite),
and degenerate to hair-pulling or an exchange of blows with
fighting (a wooden mallet with a leather strap; in Amahic, 611
kiboko or gukubita). The neighbors usually intervene, and 627
rarely, if ever, does such a thing require official atten-
tion. Fighting between men is infrequent, but can become

dangerous if it reaches the point of knives. The blow with the closed fist is unknown in Rawandiz, and one strikes with the open palm or wrestles. Biting or pinching are the most favored weapons in such an exchange, and it is considered shameful for a man to bite or scratch like a woman. As in other Iaisula communities, quarrels, sometimes quite serious, are much more common during the fast of Ramadan. Four violent exchanges were observed between women on one day during Ramadan. However, there had been in 1951 no homicides in the town for a period of three years. Criminals of a higher order are at present unknown. The last of them, Hurî Bewîl Agha, who dabbled in brigandage, smuggling, and bloodmoil, now suffers life imprisonment for the murder of Isma'îl Beg. Hurî is said to have often arranged the theft of goods from merchants, and then to have sold them back to the owners for appropriate sums.

The office of the mukhtar, Ra'ûf Effendî, in Rawandiz is peculiar, for it does not seem to have an incisive everyday definition. It is not elective, and a mukhtar is selected by the government with the more or less tacit consent of his fellows. His work, such as it is, consists in acting in liaison between the people and the civil bakaliya (at present, the kaimmaqam) and, to a certain extent, being a guarantee for their good conduct. He is without police authority, but acts to mitigate minor quarrels between townspeople, and, with the force of public opinion, as some power to command. He stands between the people and the government, presenting the

grievances of the former and explaining and facilitating 622.
the operations of the latter. He is called upon to certify certain government documents, such as an order for a young man's conscription, together with two chosen old men who act as witnesses. Ha'uf Effendi claimed to be assisted by two informal "agents" who brought him secretly the news circulating in the town, probably his own device for keeping in regular touch with popular opinion. Socially the office of mukhtar presupposes a qualification of wealth, for he is expected to maintain a diwankhana (a room in his house in which guests of social distinction could be appropriately received and entertained). Although Rowanduz itself is non-tribal and the people as a whole pay no allegiance to a chieftain, it will be seen in comparison with later exposition that the mukhtar, with several other wealthy men, occupies a position in society analogous to that of an aristocrat. In fact, a girl, instigated by her relatives in a love affair, may seek sanctuary in the house of the mukhtar, a custom which is solely reserved for chieftains in the countryside. Such a case occurred in 1949 and Ha'uf Effendi was able to smooth over the affair, arranging the girl's marriage with the youth in question.

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In closing this section it remains to contrast the present administration of the district with that of the Ottoman Empire immediately prior to the first World War. In that time Rowanduz was the seat (a kaza) of a sanjakate under the Kirkuk wealy of the vilayet of Mosul. Administratively it was thought as important as Erbil and, as

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husbands, and welcome a respite of a few weeks. To give an example, Shakir Effendi owns extensive village lands and is well known to his tenants. Throughout the year persons, for a variety of reasons, appear at his house in Rowanduz to take service for a short time and then to return to their villages. Lali Khan always has ten or fifteen such retainers, many of them women. "It would be a grave mistake to call Lali Khan's people servants," one was told, "because it would bring the whole House of Isma'il Beg after one as an insult. You see that she dresses them up in fine clothing and covers the woman with gold." Of such retainers, it remains to mention those who serve as bodyguards (gholam, from Arabic, "servant," sometimes shubeng). Just as barbarian Germanic chieftains in ancient times had the practice of surrounding themselves with bands of warrior "companions," the Kurdish chieftain attracts a following, varying in size with his wealth and importance, who are accorded the same treatment as retainers, save that they are armed and usually exempted from menial tasks. They are typically young men, impatient with village life and desirous of the prestige that surrounds an armed guard, and form a formidable group, those who carry out the work and sustain most of the casualties of the vendetta. There are a dozen or so resident in Rowanduz. The House of Isma'il Beg has a number, that of Sadiq Agha and his brother As'ad Agha several, and Karim Agha, son of the imprisoned Nuri Bawil Agha, only one. Except in degree of permanence, there is no particular

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tagger who, among other things, performed such feats as eating pebbles for elms in the shorthouse, as well as in one of the best-educated men of the community. 792 755

Turning to the Rowanduz district, it is possible to illustrate and to amplify these general remarks. First, there is a landed, hereditary aristocracy of Kurds. As far as one can gather from the meager histories of the area, the Kurds had been ruled by independent or semi-independent chieftains for an unknown period until Ottoman and Iranian power was able to extend its rule over them. This control, usually superficial, was never solidified until after the first World War. As rulers, the Kurdish chieftains led their people in war, arbitrated their quarrels, and, to some extent, directed their economy. In return for these things, they laid claim to a certain share of annual produce, animals or harvest. In some cases the chieftainship appears to have had certain democratic aspects, the new ruler, characteristically, but not necessarily, the eldest son of the deceased, selected from a noble household by an assembly of the tribesmen. In others it was purely aristocratic. As has been seen above, chieftains are many times associated with tribes, that is to say, there is no tribe without such a leader, but otherwise they are feudal overlords. Often a chieftain can be both the head of a tribal group and the "owner" of non-tribal lands and villages. The tenure of property illustrates this. Sometimes the land and flocks are owned by the 565 174 622 619 [648] 565 622 619 423

tribal group as a whole from which the chieftain is "granted" his yearly share, while in other cases they are his personal possessions, inherited through the male family, which he can dispose of as he pleases. It appears that a stage between tribal and feudal society is represented here, a combination of both systems which may have existed in this way for centuries, and which is largely primitive in character. 423 619 622 585

The aristocratic Kurdish households are, in fact, extended patrilineal families for which the term is _fesilîye_, puzzling in its similarity to the Latin _familia_. The same term is sometimes applied to houses of great wealth and numbers, but this seems to be comparatively rare. Only these households and _seyrids_, descendants of the tribe of the Prophet, keep genealogies (_şejere_, from Arabic _shajara_, "tree"). In the case of the _seyrid_ the title can be inherited on either side, but the patent of nobility is solely patrilineal. One of the tests of nobility is said to be the ability to name one's patrilineal forebears to seven generations, and no one in Rowandiz, outside of these families, is able to perform this feat. The titles of the nobility include _beg_, _agha_, and _mir_, all of Turkish derivation. In Ottoman times _pasha_ was also in use, and the grandfather of Isma'il Beg was called "Abdullah Pasha." The Arabic _shaykh_, literally, "old man," appears, as in such distinguished Kurdish figures as Shaykh Mahmud, leader of the revolts in 1922 and 1930, and Shaykh Taha, 585 596 [173] 64 585 585 554

uted for his piety, but it not only connotes chieftainship, in the sense of the Arabs, but also has a religious meaning. Certain Kurdish chieftains, shaykhs, were supposed to have an almost magical quality in their persons, and, for example, could cure ailments by the laying on of hands. In general, each son takes the title of his father, thus Rashid Agha of Jiaflan is the son of Muhammad 'Ali Agha, and all of his brothers have the same distinction. As far as hierarchy is concerned, beg, as in Mahmud Beg of the Baradost tribe, appears to have greater weight than agha, but there is no definite system. The investigator suspects, in view of some of the confusion in this regard, that titles are given very much as proper names at the time of birth. On the other hand, commoners never use them, even as names, and noblewomen have no such designations, although words such as amire, "princess," or shaq, "chieftain," may appear in their appellations.

The chieftain, to a large extent, is the symbol of his people's honor, tribesmen or tenants, and this is a matter of supreme importance to both Arab and Kurd. Honor has a large number of aspects of which the most important are the obligation of vengeance, safeguard and sanctuary, the integrity of women, and hospitality. If a man has been murdered, it is incumbent on his relatives to avenge his death, and this is the beginning of the vendetta or blood-feud. The peaceful solution is the payment of bedalkheir or blood-money, an amount calculated in goods or cash, but

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usually there is speedy recourse to arms and a vendetta can extend over decades and count scores of victims. In the case of commoners, the chieftains of the people involved often intervene, and sometimes pay the bastinkeh from their own purses, but, failing this, they are expected to aid in obtaining revenge. In the case of aristocratic households, the matter is not settled so easily, although, in rare situations, a third neutral party, a great chieftain known for his piety and justice, may be asked to arbitrate. The most famous feud of the district was that between the Houses of Isma'il Beg and Hurî Bawîl Agha, beginning in the days of the First World War, temporarily at an end with the murder of the former and the life imprisonment of the latter. There were many casualties on both sides, and several of the participants are still in prison, such as Isma'il Beg's bailiff, and the two uncles of his mother, Lell Khas, Mustafa Agha and Ilyas Agha. Although Kawandoz is non-tribal and is not bound to this or that chieftain, the townsmen took sides in the quarrel, mostly on that of Isma'il Beg, and the quarrel lingers on. The party of Hurî Bawîl Agha has now practically disappeared, and his son, Karim Agha, who resides in the town, does not dare approach the vicinity of Isma'il Beg's house from fear of further reprisal.

The vendetta has been one of the foremost features of Kurdish life for centuries, and, in spite of its toll in lives, has something of the aspect of a game or sport. Unless commoners or whole tribes are involved, most of

government personnel. It would be easy for an outsider to 628
constitute this situation, and this could not be far from
true, for the Hutu do the same themselves. The chieftain 622
is the summation of a peasant's ideals, a formidable
warrior, unrivalled in vengeance, generous in hospitality,
and gallant in conduct. An aristocratic youth is educated
to play this part. It would be difficult to find many
peoples among whom the hero, so defined, has so extensive
a daily role and so general and attractive an audience. A
number of persons in the Ruhengeri area, queried on this
point, were unable to name more than one or two chieftains
of the aristocratic group, perhaps two or three hundred
men in all, who had not been imprisoned or exiled by the
government at least once.

Safeguard, as in the case of revenge, is a matter 484
of aristocratic honor. Formerly, anyone who wished to pass 579
through a chieftain's territory was expected to put him-
self under the latter's protection, because, failing this,
he became more or less fair game for bandits or, indeed,
the chieftain himself. In past decades brigandage, like
cattle-stealing, was something of a sport, and holding up a
caravan was considered an amusing, as well as lucrative,
occupation for the aristocracy. The luckless merchant could
only apply to the chieftain for his goods which, in con-
sideration of a fee, were "recovered" and returned to him.
The easiest technique, of course, was to obtain right to
passage at first, at the expense of a few gifts, and a
number of the chieftain's men would be delegated as guards.

for the Hurds themselves, safeguard had a more important application. If a man was a member of a group engaged in a vendetta, and had to pass through dangerous territory, he could put himself under the protection of a neutral group whose men provided him with an escort and, should he be killed, were obligated to avenge his death just as if he had been one of its own.

Sanctuary is something of major importance among the Hurds. If a man had committed a crime, usually a murder, he could throw himself on the mercy of the nearest chieftain and the latter was bound by honor to protect him from his pursuers. Often the chieftain paid the bekhilbela or blood-money to the injured parties, although unrelated to them or to the criminal, as a generous gesture. Of greater interest, perhaps, the chieftain provided sanctuary for runaway lovers. If a youth and a maiden fell in love and their parents forbade the match, they sometimes fled together, and, if captured by their irate relatives, would be slain. It is said that the first thing for such fugitives to do is to have intercourse, so they cannot be separated except by death, for a woman who has lost her virginity out of wedlock must be killed by her kinsmen. If the pair were able to reach a chieftain, the latter now acted as a matchmaker. He sought out the parents of the girl, informed them that their daughter was under his protection, attempted to reconcile them to the marriage, by this time consummated, and often paid the dowry of the bride, again, as a matter

of generosity. Commoners are not in a position to quarrel with a chieftain, and the problem was usually solved in this way. The youth was summoned and kissed the hand of his reluctant father-in-law, addressing him as a parent. If, however, the fugitive couple belonged to aristocratic houses, the most complex of vendettas could follow.

The integrity of the women is perhaps the primary asset of a family's honour. If a Hutu insults anything other than the women of his opponent, he is in danger of being slain himself. If, however, he seriously questions the honour of a woman, the latter must be killed by her relatives, never the accuser. The accusation is thus extremely dangerous, and, although it is sometimes heard in joking exchanges, a serious imputation cannot be taken lightly. The honour of a man depends very much on that of his female relatives, and the primary rule in this second regard is that no woman, unmarried or married, can have unseemly traffic, specifically intercourse, with any other person than her husband. If a bride cannot demonstrate her virginity, she can be returned to her relatives who are obligated to slay her, although she is not thus cast to them in every case. Similarly, if there is an accusation of adultery, a wife can be directed to the same fate. The woman, it might be said, is always the offender. It follows that if a woman errs in this way and is detected, she must flee, either to a chieftain or

to the great cities, and even in these places the feels far from secure. While this concept is common to families of any class of society, it reaches its apogee among those of the aristocracy. If the daughter of a commoner runs away, he may be unable or unwilling to do anything about it, but a chief'ain, as the personification of his people's honour, is more or less bound to exact justice. Thus insulting the integrity of a noblewoman can also result in violence.

Finally, hospitality is a necessary concomitant of a chief'ain's honour, and an ideal of all. "To be a chief'ain," it was said, "a one must belong to a noble house, must be followed by armed men, and must have a guest-room." Since the aristocratic houses maintain *ilyoshikuwa* which vary considerably in size and form according to their status. In some cases it is only a few rooms within the house and in others a separate building. Some chief'ains have large tents pitched as guest-rooms in the summer. In furnishings and service the aristocratic guest-room does not differ from that described in the preceding section, and the distinction between it and the *ilyoshikuwa* of, say, a wealthy merchant, is that it must always be open to strangers, no matter what their station in life. Strictly speaking, the rule of hospitality applies to any Kurdish house, but, outside of emergencies, its usual application is among the aristocrats. One of the functional aspects of the support of the chief'ainship appears here. A poor villager cannot entertain a stranger in sumptuous fashion,

and for this reason he is glad to give a share of his produce, if only that his ruler, the symbol of the group, can show hospitality, which is, in fact, that of the poor villager himself. These aristocratic guest-rooms, in addition to providing food and shelter for whoever seeks them, are used to some extent as a clubhouse for the men, and a committee, tribesmen or tenant, can appear during the day for tea, tobacco, and the latest gossip. The chieftains themselves use them for what, in want of a better term, might be called their "courts," where they entertain friends and visitors, hear the complaints and news of their people, and direct their various activities. The etiquette of entering such a guest-room is exactly like that described above for a shebeen, or tea-shop, and the activity is much the same, talking and smoking, although the atmosphere is more solemn and the refreshments gentle. As in the case of the Arab Bedouin, a stranger may enjoy hospitality unchallenged for three days, and after this period the chieftain, while he does not send the away, may ask his name and his errand. Questioning the hospitality of a chieftain, which constitutes a reflection on his people, is an extremely grave insult, and can also provide the basis of a feud. Thus visitors in a remote district must avail themselves of the chieftain's guest-room, for, if they do not, it may be thought an insult is intended. Speaking of a party of strangers in the harvest country, a Hurd said, "It is necessary for them

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to let Ahmed Beg know of their presence and visit his [622]
[residence], or he will think they look down on his hospital- 574
ity, or, worse, do not know him or recognize him as a
chieftain."

Save for the question of hospitality, it may be seen [423]
from the section on administration that the government [649]
takes a strong interest in chieftains' activities. The
state lays claim to all unregistered land, [miriye], which
includes a large amount of "tribal" and village territory,
and would prefer to collect taxes directly from the pea-
sants, thus cutting off the most important source of
aristocratic revenue. Some of the chieftains, shrewder of
the times, have attempted to have tribal lands registered
in their own names. The execution of the law belongs to [649]
the government, either the civil code of the judge or the [642]
tribal code of the [mirmiran]. Vengeance is also of the
state, and homicides are to be handled by the police and [610]
the courts, rather than the vendetta. Safeguard and
sanctuary in a well-policed district are thought to be
unnecessary. Modern Iraq is in concept democratic, and [554]
such titles as [agha], [beg], or [shaikh], while they are widely
used, do not enjoy the sanction of law. The army and the
constabulary are thought adequate to handle military
vengeance, and the arming of a populace, particularly
hordes of bodyguards, is considered superfluous, if not
dangerous. Thus the Kurdish aristocracy has lost many of [525]
its important functions and perogatives. They are no longer [174]
leaders in war or administrators, and much of their

say technical device within their means have been associated with slavery. European and American medical goods are eagerly sought, and there is almost a childlike faith in the wonders of the Western World. "We see," said an elder, "some of this area a Switzerland of the Middle East." The less well-informed, whose knowledge only extends to the Mediterranean, say the same thing, having reference to Lebanon. Insofar as family life is concerned, the Tutsi, regarding themselves as the acme, point with pride to their "more enlightened" treatment of women in terms of the evil and social intercourse, but are oblivious of any wider extent of this liberality. In short, the Tutsi aristocracy represents an extremely active class, unhampered by most aspects of Westernization, but weakened by their own dissensions and threatened by the encroachment of a new government. It seems impossible, in view of so many variables, to predict whether or not they will be able to maintain their integrity.

Inasmuch as they represent the first system in which the only significant division is between aristocrat and commoner, the Tutsi chieftains of the Rwandan area are often enumerated and wear the national costume as it has been described in the preceding section. Only a moderate number from this group have obtained higher education and have subsequently entered the government service. They, indeed, are illiterate and have no knowledge of Arabic, the language of the government. In Rwanda only three aristocratic houses are represented, those of Isaa'li

Sha, Hurl Ismail Agha, and Sadiq Agha. Because that of 672
Hurl Ismail Agha has suffered adverse fortunes, the House 545
of Isma'il Beg, headed by Lali Khan, has the greatest interest in the town, owning considerable property therein. Sadiq Agha and his brother As'ad Agha have a house in the town, but their property consists of a village elsewhere in the district. The House of Mohammed 'Ali Agha might be mentioned, for it is nearby at Jiaolan, and its men, such as Sadiq Agha, spend much of their time in the town. The chieftains, not only of these families but of the district at large, enter into daily life to a large extent. They provide a constant source of gossip and, to some extent, revenue, for they are everyday visitors to the town and make many of their purchases there. One might inquire how young chieftains such as Karim Agha, the son of Hurl Ismail Agha, or Ismail Agha of Jiaolan, spend their day, and the answer is that they do very little aside from visiting friends or strolling about the town, sometimes accompanied by bodyguards. Conversation accounts for a great deal of their time. The chieftains' relations with the government personnel are cordial, although they have nothing in common with the younger officials and officers. An interesting meeting took place between Sayyid Ahmed of Betas and the army officer, Colonel Khalid Naqshbandi, who had captured him during the last revolt and sent him into exile in southern Iraq. Both parties were amused at the meeting, and treated each other with the best of humor. Sayyid Ahmed,

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in contrast to the government, treating such affairs more as sport rather than anything else. Sayyid Ahmed subsequently recounted with more pleasure his experiences in exile, for he did not speak Amsila at the time. He learnt the official in charge of his, for example, called "stupid" until his back by ostentation, and concluded that this was his name, always addressing the unfortunate officer as "Stupid Dog" until he was finally corrected. In order to designate the type of meat he desired for his meals, he was forced to resort to imitations of the animals in question, and thought his own picture, that of a Scottish aristocrat, a man of the great Stuyth Tube, flapping his arms and crowing to a bewildered Arab orderly, most amusing.

Toward the townspeople, the chief's are much more friendly, calling them by name and spending long hours talking with those of higher status, such as wealthy merchants. They are not fond of either the shopkeeps or the mosque, although one occasionally finds them there. Insofar as they do not marry within their own families, they prefer the daughters of the wealthy merchants and landowners of the town, for these are supposed to be more "refined," and hence to have greater prestige, than any village maiden. The daughter of Ra'uf Effendi, for example, is married to an aristocrat from elsewhere in the district, Agha Rashid Agha (the first agha here used as a proper name). Among themselves, there is extensive community of interest and

social exchange, extending beyond the district itself, according to certain alignments. Lali Khan always has a number of visitors, such as Sayyid Ahmad and his brothers, and the same is true, to a lesser extent, of Sadiq Agha. These alignments, spoken of above, are formed on the basis of old feuds, family friendships, political sentiments, and the like. Normally the guests of Sadiq Agha are not to be seen at the house of Jamal'il Beg, and the reverse is true, although there need be no ill-feeling between the two groups. To draw up a chart of these matters would be complex and of little value, inasmuch as they are particularly changing and are vast in number. To give some examples, Karim Agha never visits the house of Jamal'il Beg because of a feud, but those of Sayyid Ahmad and his brothers because the latter are friends of Lali Khan. His own friend, a Kashki Agha (out of District) calls on Sadiq Agha, but does not visit Lali Khan or Sayyid Ahmad because of his friendship with Karim Agha. Mahmud Beg of the Darashuri is friendly with Sayyid Ahmad, but has nothing to do with Sadiq Agha, and hence Karim Agha and his friend, because he does not sympathise with a feud in which Sadiq Agha was involved. To extend the matter further, Karim Agha does not patronize merchants in the Jang who are friends or clients of Lali Khan. Similarly, Sayyid Ahmad, whenever he visits the town, has no traffic with those who favour Karim Agha. This network of friendships and alliances among the aristocracy is an important feature of their life, but it need not extend to the

townspeople themselves, or to the government personnel, although most of the details are commonplace. Marriages between aristocratic houses often follow these alignments, although now and then a wedding is arranged which will join two houses not normally friendly toward each other. A chieftain with a number of daughters and sufficient wealth and prestige to attract suitors can build up quite a system of allies, thus increasing his own power, and the same can be done with a number of sons.

Turning to the townspeople, who in the first system constitute the mass of commoners, a rather confused social hierarchy is revealed. Several concepts are responsible for this, the first of which is that it is considered demeaning for men of the "upper" class to work with their hands. The group of persons who are not so talented, in addition to the aristocracy, officials, and officers, thus includes among the people of the town the clerks, landowners, sailors or priests, and businessmen, such as the caravan merchants and the owners of the slaughter and the hotel. Another person is termed effendi or "gentleman," and occupies the highest ranks of the commoner group. Two examples are provided by Shaikh Effendi and Ha'af effendi, both landowners. In addition to their properties, Shaikh Effendi is the clerk of the judge's court and Ha'af Effendi is the mukhtar or representative of the townspeople. The chief cadi of the town is addressed as "Hallo 'Abd-el-Karim Effendi." Literacy, a distinctive requirement of the

unrelated families. For the townspeople, then, the mii is both a building and the group of relatives who live therein. A townsman who occupies a new dwelling, although he retains his connection with his parental home and may speak of himself as a member of that mii, has formed a new unit which becomes a mii in the social sense in its own right. 58

The matter of the chieftains and a few large and wealthy families of social pretensions is otherwise. It is customary, as in the case of commoners, to refer to an aristocratic household as a mii, for example, the "House of Iawa'ii Bag," but a chieftain belongs to a family, an extended patrilineal group in which a much wider and more exact accounting of kin relationships is kept. The chieftains, as has been said, are, with the exception of certain descendants of the tribe of the Prophet, the only persons who memorize genealogies, and this, more than anything else, is the distinguishing feature of the families. Like the mii, this group is endogamous and exogamous, and is not formally named. The point of reference in the genealogy is some more or less illustrious forebear. Thus the deceased Iawa'ii Bag and his mother Lalii Khoo (who was a collateral relative of Iawa'ii Bag's father) are referred to as "descendants of Kar Pasha," that famous revolutionary chieftain who achieved a temporary independence from the Turks in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The nucleus of this genealogy is a list of patrilineal ancestors in a direct line ascending some seven or eight generations, a 63 [illegible]

each one having the same claim on his brothers. The latter custom is reflected in the transmission of aristocratic Ewedish titles. All of the sons of a chieftain, irrespective of age or the rank of their mothers, receive the title of the father and enjoy an equal share in the property. Tribal chieftainship, as opposed to feudal overlordship, is usually settled on the oldest son, despite of the fact that the remaining brothers continue to enjoy the privileges of rank and share in the goods of the estate. Thus, if one have a plurality of sons and daughters in each generation and the original holding is supplemented by additional gains, it follows that an individual's inheritance grows progressively smaller with each death. Among the Ekalia peasantry, where the amount of arable land is limited, as in certain areas in Egypt or in Syria, a single person's plot can soon diminish to a size insufficient to support a couple and the luckless legatee must seek employment elsewhere, usually as a tenant cultivator on some larger holding. The situation in Kapeletma is not quite so difficult, inasmuch as a person can always put out a new field from the unclaimed lands of the state domain. In a situation in which the brothers or other relatives have quarrelled, property which by virtue of its size could guarantee an income for all can be reduced through inheritance into segments which are far from profitable. The practice in such cases, commonly handled by process of law, is to sell the property in question and to apportion each his share in money. It

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this prospered, I obtained a contract to furnish the camp with fresh vegetables. I became thus a man of some wealth.

There was a man in Rewarden who had great influence, Sayid Ahmed Effendi Jabirland. He begged me to become mukhtar, representative of the people to the government. Sayid effendi bore names of title. He advised me not to do it, because I did not have great wealth. I did not listen and the prisoners elected me mukhtar which appointed me governor of the town. I sought Sayid Ma'ud and pulled his into a narrow street. "Now I am master of Rewarden," I told him. Everyone came to visit me, however, and I had to give them free food and clothing. I lost my money, and had to sell my horse, my pistol, and most of my wardrobe. Finally, I had to give up being governor and Sayid effendi was given the post again.

After this, I became sanitary inspector for the prisons, the municipality. I asked the prisoners to give me full authority, and remember one letter on cleanliness. I hired a man to shout in the streets that by order of mukhtar anyone who was found throwing rubbish or dirty water in the streets or who neglected to sweep in front of his house or who sold food with dirt in it should be fined. The fine was five piastres, a large sum. I also ordered that those selling food or kitchenware should have their plates shine like silver. I gathered the butchers together and told them they must cover their meat with white gauze to keep off the flies. I secretly inspected the weights, and I found that many merchants were selling less than the proper measure. I covered the top of the stream which gives Rewarden its water with barbed wire and forbade anyone to bathe in it. No person had the right to wash his feet or his clothes in it. When people saw me, they ran for cover. On my reports, the government collected 170 piastres from the people of Rewarden, Lewizan, and Upsim. My salary was not large, however, and no one appreciated what I was doing. People complained to the prisoners about my fines and my orders, and I had to leave the post.

Thus I left this job and went back to my old trade as a barber. You here see my shop in the house and you know that I am the best barber in Rewarden. I became a darvish and a shaikh (Arabic, "successor," presumably to the Prophet) by studying with one old man, and now I am a great teacher with students of my own. I teach them such things as cutting themselves without pain, piercing their flesh with skewers, and catching snakes. I make up poems and songs in Kurdish. My present duties are to prepare

and larger confederations of kinship groups are articulated with a similar phraseology. The Kurdish tribe, which has not been extensively discussed, represents in large part such a unit. The lands of the tribe, agricultural or pastoral, are the property of kinship groups, extended patrilineal families, as are the flocks and herds, and an individual cannot alienate them in quantity without difficulty. Chieftainship is hereditary, commonly with the democratic approval of the men of the tribe. Some chieftains are undistinguished from their tribesmen save in the size of their families' holdings, and others receive a customary share of the annual produce. The Kurdish tribe, then, is traditionally an alliance of extended patrilineal families, sometimes with the fiction of a common ancestor, and membership in the tribe depends on membership in the family, a matter of "blood" descent. Tribal life is directed by the chieftain, and the murder of a member or the theft of property by an outsider is never permitted to go unavenged.

Feudalism, an arrangement different than that of the tribe, requires no redefinition here. It is a personal exchange of duties between landlord and tenant, and is not represented in the Rowandux district by the nomads whose society is exclusively tribal. It seems to have arisen in two ways, in the first of which the chieftains of nomadic groups took agricultural villages under their protection. One might remark again that the nomad, because of his mobility and firepower, has a military advantage over the villager. In the second, some powerful families, by the

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

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responsibility for a group of British officers which had been taken prisoner by her cousin and brother-in-law, Sheikh Mahmud, during the disturbances in that town in 1919. The wisdom of this was demonstrated shortly afterwards when Sheikh Mahmud was captured near the Basian Pass and, on account of her behaviour, a sentence of death passed upon him was reduced to imprisonment for life[31], which later was rescinded.

Another prominent Kurdish woman, Fātima Khas, is referred to by Edmonds[34]. After her husband's death she administered his estate which comprised eight villages. Elected by the inhabitants of the villages she negotiated, although a woman, with the government authorities.

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The information available from various male authors can be summed up as follows: The Kurdish woman is said to possess a far freer position than is the case in other Muslim areas. She does not veil, except in towns and urban surroundings. Monogami prevails. "Love marriages" can occur.

Below I shall describe the extent to which this information tallies with my personal experience as a woman amongst Kurdish women in Southern Kurdistan.

Fig. 1. Peasant woman crushing wheat in a revolving grinder. Topzawa.

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613 criteria and assumes a functioning organization. A simple descent group or lineage is in Kurdish called *boz; Hoz-i-Kako-Hamma* is simply the family, all the descendants in male line from Kaka 614 Hamma, and not a *tira* in any sense of the word. However, since the concept of the genealogically defined lineage group is important in the definition of the *tira*, and, in fact, ideally the whole basis of it, a certain confusing interchange of the terms might be expected. In the above list, *Hoz-i-Jarweiz*, the family or descendants of Jarweiz, serves as the name of a *tira;* but this group is a *tira* by virtue of its organization as a political unit, not merely because relationship in a large *boz*, founded by Jarweiz, has been recognized.

Further confusion may result from the use of Arabic synonyms for the Kurdish terms: Leach (op. cit., p. 13 ff) unsuccessfully attempts to make a distinction, based on size of the unit, between *tira* and *taifa*, the latter being in fact an Arabic term for *boz*, family.

The term *tira* is regularly used for tribes and tribal sections of highly variable size, and seems to refer to the political unit of the size which is significant in the context of immediate discussion. Thus the solidary Jaf will tell strangers that he is of the Jaf *tira*, while among a group of Jaf the term *tira* will have reference to subtribe or branch.

• 632 614 Each *tira* in the above list is led by a hereditary *Reiz* (leader), and has traditional rights to specific pastures and camping sites. These grazing rights are usually exclusive, or they may be shared with local villagers, who raise a crop in the spring and let the Jaf flocks graze there in the fall. Formerly, this relation between nomad and sedentary might be established by force by the Jaf on any land; now some rent is generally paid to the local farmers in return for right to pasturage. The migrations of the whole Jaf *ashiret* are coordinated, and the movement of each *tira* is regulated by its *Reiz*, who serves as intermediary between his group and the *Begzada* leaders of the whole *ashiret*.

614 BRANCHES. With the internal growth of population in one *tira*, or due to tensions and conflicts within it, a branch may split off and become an independent unit. This group then traces descent from the parent group, but is formally independent. In the above

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MAll Kurd MAll

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565 respecting men should not engage in economic pursuits, their main
461 role was formerly that of warriors, protecting the people and flocks
554 from attacks by other groups. Only the very poor herded their own cattle. Where one person does not own enough animals to make up the normal herding unit of 100, composite herds are created along kinship lines, with father, brother, mam, etc. Differences in wealth are tremendous, apparently on a continuous scale, some persons owning a total of 2,000 animals, some as few as 10, some quite destitute and dependent on richer relatives for subsistence and work.

621 With the tendency towards parallel cousin marriage, every group
64 tends to split up into separate lineages, which continue separate over long periods of time. Thus semi-endogamous sections are created within the *tira* itself, usually identified with separate *khels*. But since the *khel* is a residential unit, the main unity of which stems from economic ties, persons of any lineage section may travel for longer or shorter periods with any *khel* to which their economic activities might attach them. Generally, one of these semi-endogamous lineage sections will form the wealthy core of a *khel*, to which a more or less variable group of less privileged families, related or not, are connected by economic ties.

• 622 These endogamous tendencies are also operative in the family of
614 the *Raiz*. The position as *Raiz* is inherited, and the family of the
581 *Raiz* therefore takes on the appearance of a noble class or caste. The process by which such a caste would truly emerge, however, would be through intermarriage with the «noble» lineage segments of other tiras. There seem in fact to be few such kinship ties established between *Raiz* families of different groups. A certain number of marriages will be exogamous as far as the *Raiz* family is concerned, if only from the occasional lack of available spouses in the limited family group. But these exogamous marriages more frequently establish ties between the *Raiz* and wealthy lineage segments among the «commoners» within the *tira* itself. It would thus seem that marriages are manipulated to reinforce the power of the *Raiz* within the *tira* itself, rather than to separate him off as a member of a distinctive and noble caste. To reify a distinction between «nobleman» and «commoner» within the *tira* would thus be an error, since the separa-

7: Barth E-5 1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

teness of the *Raiz* lineage follows from common marriage usage, and is no different in nature from the separateness of the wealthier as compared to the poorer lineage sections of the group.

The hereditary position as *Raiz* is simply vested in the leading lineage segment of the *ina*. An interesting problem arises as to what adjustments are made in the event of decline in wealth or the appearance of other impediments to leadership in this lineage. It is customary for persons ina position of leadership to appoint their successor, usually a son, while they are still in a position of control. In the case of disagreement between the existing *Raiz* and the general population as to who should succeed him, the pattern of succession is probably decided by the bias in the balance between the positive power (primarily economic) of the *Raiz*, and the degree of general resentment to his decision. Where the power and prestige of the *Raiz* has declined, leadership might thus fairly easily be shifted to a stronger and wealthier collateral line. (Compare p. 126 for a more nearly «democratic» mechanism of appointing successor to the *Raiz*.)

I had no opportunity to ascertain the actual extent of the power vested in the *Raiz*. It would seem to be rather dependent on his means and personality, be, these permitting, to afford him considerable possibilities to enforce his decisions. He is on the other hand regarded as being subject to the *Begs* in all matters, and directly responsible to them.

The *Beg* leaders of the Jaf are sometimes represented as belonging to a *tira* of their own, the *Begzada*; more correctly the *Begzada* is regarded as a family *oimaq*, divided into the three branches Welled Begi, Kikhasrao Begi, and Bahram Begi. The political head may be drawn from any of these. The Kikhasrao Begi and Bahram Begi of today are descended by 7 generations from the common ancestor Zahir Beg. The Welled Begi are somewhat further removed. All the *Begzada* are now settled and live as absentee landowners of numerous Jaf and other villages. It is thus extremely difficult to form any picture of the true position of the leaders in the political organization of the nomadic Jaf. Some 60 years ago, authority was divided between the two Begzaa brothers Osman and Mahmud Pasha, the latter being the leader of the nomadic section. Mahmud Pasha was

wand, and Begzada. As will be noticed, the branch of Yadjar, to which the Koni Sardis belong, is not in this list. The Koni Sardis in fact belong to the Begzada branch, so either Yadjar is the ancestor of all the Begzada, or a smaller segment category has been elevated to the level of a major branch, for the greater glory of the Koni Sard group. The villagers in Tazgah assert to belong to the Bablawand division, again made up of the villagers from Tazgah and Chalokachal, the latter now having been abandoned and the villagers scattered. The Bablawand were derived from the Rashawand, in unspecified fashion. A Tazgah model of their position in the *tira* would thus read as shown in Diagram No. 4.

The *Agha* of a village is appointed or granted power by the male inhabitants of that village. In practice, the position is hereditary, but not according to any rule of seniority, and village preference undoubtedly influences the pattern of succession. The village *Agha* has only the authority which follows from his own power and prestige, and the goodwill of his followers.

The position as *Agha* of one of the four major branches is either similarly hereditary, or, «if there is no suitable son of the old *Aghas*», a new *Agha* is elected by the villagers. These *Aghas* will generally have the position and means to support a group of retainers, paralleling the *Pyshtmala* of the Jaf *Begs*. They thus have a vaguely institutionalized mechanism to enforce their authority. Thus, though the formal position of the *Aghas* of the four major Hamawand segments is unlike that of the Jaf *Begzada*, the actual differences more reflect the difference in scale than in formal position.

Neither the Jaf nor the Hamawand lineage organizations function in the «ideal» pattern closely exemplified by the Cyrenaica Bedouin, discussed above. A position of authority and super-ordination does in fact become vested in the individual *Agha* and *Raiz*, who tends to apply coercive means to support such a hierarchy of authority. Though the ideal «charter» of the political structure is that of a segmentary lineage organization, the system does in fact function in a somewhat different pattern, as will be shown more fully later.

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF TENANT VILLAGES

631 The political organization of the non-tribal areas is generally much simpler, unifying a much smaller group. Immediately above the village level, external administration takes over control. In the village itself, a *kikha* or *mukhtar* (mayor, headman) is elected to serve as an intermediary between the people of the village and the authorities. Frequently he is appointed from above rather than freely elected, in an attempt to achieve a balance of power within the village. In the official governmental system, the *kikha* of the village is the official of the smallest unit. A hierarchy of officers, appointed from above in the bureaucratic system, administers progressively more inclusive areas, terminating in the bureaucratic head, the *Mutasarrif* of the *Liwa* (governor of the province), directly responsible to the government ministries, and with considerable autonomy. In practice, however, the landowner of the village intervenes at the base of this hierarchy, and the *kikha* serves as an intermediary between the villagers and the landowner, and has few dealings directly with official administration.

• 622 621 When left to their own devices, the villagers generally elect to office the older male leader of the largest kinship group. As a consequence of the marriage pattern, such kinship groups tend to separate off as endogamous blocks. But due to the lower frequency of FaBrDa marriage among the non-tribal villagers (see p. 68), these blocks show less organization and unity than the endogamous subsections in the tribal system, and could not properly be called lineages. Furthermore, they tend to be bilateral, in the sense that relationships traced through female links attain some importance. The relative sizes of these bilateral kinship blocks change fairly slowly, so village headmanship, as well as leadership in the kinship groups, tends to follow an apparently hereditary pattern from father to son.

622 The powers of the *kikha* derive in part from his powers as the head of such a group, in part from his closer relations with the landowner, and the implicit threat of reporting illegalities (or in fact making false accusations) to him. As the leader of the village,

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

he also exercises certain rights in his relations with the landowner — he can e. g. exclude any newcomer from village membership.

Among the various villages in an area, or those belonging to one landowner, there is no attempt at coordination. My host own among others, the three neighboring villages Hazar Merd, Decon and Darbaro in the Suleimani valley. These villages share, for historical reasons, the usifruct rights to the surrounding area. Rather than making any attempt at conserted action in matters concerning them all, e. g. by meetings of the village headmen, there exists considerable enmity between the three villages. A marriage between the son of the *kikha* of Decon and the daughter of the leading family of Hazar Merd does not seem to have had any «political» results, and was probably manipulated to enhance the prestige of the *kikha* and his son in their own village.

GENERAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The application of these formal political organizations, both of the lineage and feudal types, is modified by one basic principle, namely, the universal application of status difference, and the resulting lack of conceptualization of «the office», as apart from the total person occupying it at any one moment. An example might illustrate the point: Upon my arrival in the village of Decon, a small group of workmen were engaged in laying a brick floor in the local house of my host, the landowner. In their social classification of me, the only criterion available to them was the fact of my being his guest; so I enjoyed a reflection of his high status position, and consequently found myself in a relation of super-ordination with respect to the workmen. They found it necessary to interrupt their work unasked to perform personal servises for me, e. g. serving me my tea, etc. The workmen, brought to the village for the sole purpose of laying the brick floor, had no feeling that theirs was only a part-role in the situation, where they were expected to perform a specific service and no more. The status of bricklayers is clearly inferior to that of friend-of-the-landowner; the fact that their contact was by virtue of their office as bricklayers did not release them from universal sub-ordination to the occupier of higher status. Werever a

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

554 clear status difference is recognized, such an all-inclusive relation of super- and sub-ordination seems to result, and demands even of personal services by the possessor of higher status are thought reasonable.

• 622 554 In the formal organization, groups are clearly defined, on criteria of descent and residence, and each group is furnished with a named leader. But the nature of the leader's *office* remains rather vague; he is, in Max Weber's terms (Parsons 1941, p. 121), granted a liberal sphere of «arbitrary free grace». For a large part, the political leaders are not followed by virtue of their holding an «office», but are granted the right to make political, as well as other, demands on their followers by virtue of their higher status position — which waxes and wanes with the vicissitudes of fortune. Though the formal political categories are named and hierarchically ordered, the actual distribution and foci of power and control in the village and lineage remain quite fluid.

It is profitable in our analysis to make a distinction between *authority*, the more or less «legitimate» powers attached to a specific office or part-status, and the blanket term *power*, which depends upon the *total* status position of a particular individual, and his personal charisma (Weber, 1947), and is taken to cover the individual's total ability to lead or otherwise control the actions of other people.

This distinction is generally not made by the Kurdish villager, since, indeed, the abstract concept of an office is hardly developed; but it is useful in an analysis to distinguish the legitimate powers that belong with the office or part-status. The lack of a conceptual distinction in Kurdish thinking between authority in this sense and total power is evident in the almost complete absence of *lateral* relations between a specialized staff of functionals, in favor of a complete dominance of *line* relations of supra- and sub-ordination.

Returning to the applicability of the term *authority* in such a system: The total status position of the individual, from which his power stems, is a product of *all* his part-statuses, not only in the political field, but also in other hierarchies (e. g. hierarchies of religious power, wealth and class status, etc, cf. p. 78 ff.). Any for-

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MAll Kurd MAll

mal, named political position, however, is connected with an approximate total status position as a sort of stereotype. The relative grading of formal political positions is vaguely defined, and the individuals of a village, through competing for the positions, will align in super- and subordination according to this grading. Thus certain ill defined demands and powers are *expected* (and therefore more readily submitted to) from persons occupying such positions. This amount of expected and generally unquestioned power is the authority that belongs with the particular position. The authority is thus not *derived* from the part-status, as it would if it were an office; it is brought to it. Persons occupying the position may at times not be able to exert it; nonetheless, in the formal political organization, this authority and degree of ability to apply sanctions of some kind is assumed.

These considerations are applicable in both the tribal and the non-tribal political systems, and modify the expression that these systems take. The evident differences between Kurdish tribal and non-tribal structure are thus reduced, and the Kurdish segmentary lineage organization becomes in its actual application more similar to the Kurdish non-tribal organization than to the classical segmentary organizations, exemplified above by the Cyrenaica Bedouin. When combined with this principle of universal application of status difference, the segmentary structure of the lineage offers the framework for a hierarchical organization of leaders of segments. And these segments are residential and territorial units, as are the units in the non-tribal system. In the following, then, Kurdish lineage organization will be seen as a hierarchy of leaders of groups of increasing genelogical spread, rather than in the classical manner as whole segments in opposition.

The general characteristics of Kurdish political systems correspond in many ways to those of the *traditional* system of Max Weber (op. cit.). The rules governing the various positions in the hierarchy are not enacted, they are traditionally defined. «The order underlying a system of traditional authority always defines a system of statuses of persons who can legitimately exercise authority». The concept of the *office* is undeveloped: «Such a status is different from an «office». It does not involve specifically defined powers with

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

A Hamawand *Agha*, normally a close relative of the leader of the warparty, would be appointed to the conquered village. He would settle permanently in the village with a small group of Hamawand supporters. What remained of the local taxes after their immediate needs were satisfied would be passed on to the *Agha* leader of the original party.

Conflicts easily arose between the Hamawand usurper and his original backer. As soon as the balance of power changed in favor of the former, and he further felt that he would be able to control the conquered village with his own forces, he would declare himself independent and thereby found a new lineage branch.

It may seem surprising that the smaller group in such a village should be successful in forcibly dominating the larger group for any length of time. As far as the conquest itself is concerned, the point was clearly made to me by the leader of one group of subjected serfs: «In those days, people were so busy with their farms and things, they had no time to be ready with guns and horses. Those who had enough money to feed the man that ride around on horses could conquer such poor villages.» And later, although the local Hamawands may have declared themselves independent of their old village, they could still count on support from their fellow tribesmen in case of revolt. The peasants, on the other hand, had no organization integrating a larger group. Furthermore, it is the peasant group who has the vested interest in peace, so that the crop can ripen and the stores survive. In case of conflict, the Hamawands risked only the loss of an asset, whereas the peasants, no matter what the outcome might be, were practically assured the loss of their whole year's crop.

The local group that emerged from these conquests has a very characteristic structure and organization. Except where external administration intervenes effectively, all political power is in the hands of a well organized Hamawand minority, led by an hereditary *Agha*. This ruling group has vested interests in remaining separate from the remainder of the village, and the close tribal organization limited by descent provides the necessary mechanism.

This political dominance serves primarily to enforce certain privileges in the economic field. The Hamawands regard themselves as

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struct a formula for the addition of these part-statuses. Their relative weights are revealed only in very few contexts of real life, since such a tremendous number of variables combine in the relations between any two individuals. 621 554

At least in certain situations, some qualifications to leadership take precedence over others, and impediments in one field can be overcome or outweighed by advantages in other fields. With respect to the part-status positions, some of these seem to be mutually incompatible, in that they can not easily be occupied by the same individual; others are mutually exclusive to the extent of not coexisting in the same local community. Finally, there are conflicts of loyalties: which units of reference take precedence over others in a situation of choice.

The culture of the Kurdish villager is not an integrated culture, in the sense that there are no discrepancies and conflicts between norms. Various rules and values may in certain situations come into clear opposition. Though for some such conflicts, standardized solutions or circumlocutions have been developed, this is most clearly not true of all. Such unresolved problems are the fields where change and adaptation take place. But by virtue of the lack of consistent logic and a minimum of agreement, these are fields that can not readily be described, much less analysed, by the anthropologist. The following section contains a discussion, based on my own and some secondary material, of some of the more crude and obvious aspects of this situation. All I can attempt to do is demonstrate a few clearer cases of precedence and incompatibility, and suggest certain systematic distinctions between questions of (a) impediments to leadership, (b) general incompatibility of part-statuses, and (c) precedence of loyalties to alternative groups and identifications.

IMPEDIMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS TO LEADERSHIP

The order of importance of the various qualifications to high positions are most clearly revealed in the emergence of formally recognized leadership. In certain situations, impediments to leadership may be overcome by the posession of other qualifications that take precedence. Since autonomous Kurdish institutions are only partially 622 •

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functioning in these fields, the data is incomplete; moreover, the relative importance of various qualifications seem to differ somewhat between the infra-village and supra-village levels, and between the tribal and feudal organizations.

The impediment of female sex. The clearest case, illustrating the type of problem I am concerned with, relates to the position of the women who, except for her sex, fulfills all the requirements of a leader. I have previously stated that the woman plays no active part in political life in the widest sense. On the village level, that seems to be invariably true. But on the supra-village level, there are some exceptions. The problem, in the Kurdish system, amounts to what should take precedence, the impediment of female sex, or the qualifications of high family status, wealth, etc. In the village, the differences in family status and wealth are not great enough to counterbalance an obverse difference in sex; among the leading families of Southern Kurdistan, these differences in status and wealth as compared to the general population become great enough to override the impediment of female sex, and in several cases women have emerged as leaders of considerable consequence.

The most spectatcular case was that of *Adela Khanem*, leader of the Jaf confederacy around the time of the First World War. She belonged to the ruling lineage of Ardalan princes in the southern provinces of Persian Kurdistan, and married Osman Pasha, the leader of the sedentary section of the Jaf. To him, she was of assistance in administration etc., and upon his death she retained or assumed the position as leader of the Jaf *Begzada*. Soane (op. cit.) after his visit with her before Osman Pasha's death, speaks very highly of her, both as a person and as a ruler. In 1919, she is described as «. . . about 60 years of age, but, thanks to the skillful, though liberal, use of artificial aids, she did not look a day over 40». (Lees, 1928, p. 257). In the conflicts following the war, she pursued an independent policy of cooperation with the British and opposition to Shaikh Mahmud.

A contemporary example is *Hafsakhan*, cousin and sister-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud. As a young girl, in the critical period of Shaikh Mahmud's rebellion, she assumed the responsibility for a handful of imprisoned British officers, in order to protect them from Kurdish

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irregulars. The just treatment extended to these prisoners was later the official British grounds for commuting Shaikh Mahmud's death sentence to life-long exile (later commuted further).

Hafsakhan has since retained a prominent position in Suleimani, and today receives visitors of both sexes in her own gardens, independent of her husband, Shaikh Kader. A small, darkhaired, attractive woman, she shows a social grace and intelligence that fully justifies her reputation.

Women who are active in the political field remain the exceptions, however, even among the most prominent families. It would seem that in addition to exceptional ability as well as interest — and the latter is probably fairly rare too — somewhat unusual circumstances are required to give a woman the opportunity to enter publicly into political life. Adela Khanem did so as the trusted representative and later widow of Osman Pasha, and surely gained popularity in Ottoman times from her Persian origin; Hafsakhan showed wise resolution in a situation for which there was no clear precedence. But the mere fact that such women are found at all in Moslem Kurdistan indicates the very great prestige attached to their other qualifications, primarily the fact of membership in the prominent families to which they belong.

The impediment of low birth. A second impediment to leadership is that of low birth, or, in the tribal system, descent from a non-lineage member. This, just as female sex, does not seem ever to be an absolute impediment that can not be out-weighed by qualifications in other fields. Status in Kurdish society is certainly in part inherited, and descent from prominent persons is a contributary qualification to leadership, but does not seem in any political context to be an absolute *requirement*.

Before external administration «froze» the formerly fluid feudal hierarchies of Southern Kurdistan, there were constant changes in personnel and organization of territories. Political power was roughly related to land ownership — obviouly, since land was passed on in family lines, political hierarchies may be spoken of in terms of «dynasties». But there were only practical, no fundamental, difficulties preventing a laborer's son from working his way up

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565 through a feudal hierarchy, and eventually be rewarded with a
• 622 feudal fief, or alternatively to become a leader of a war party large
654 enough to conquer a domain. Both these paths of upward mobility were in fact in constant use, and the problem facing the ambitious youth was simply that of how best to become qualified, in terms of wealth and prestige, to assume leadership. This wealth and prestige could be achieved through luck in small raids, bravery and self-assertion, ability to handle people, wide extension of ties of friendship, and the impediment of low birth could thus be out-weighed.

There is, however, an aristocratic undertone to much Kurdish political thinking, and especially members of the highest leading families of the area are ascribed charisma by virtue of their descent, on the same pattern as are the descendants of the Prophet. Thus, what is passed on in the families of high status is more than mere wealth; and the fact of low birth, quite apart from its disadvantage in terms of initial poverty, would create considerable difficulty if the person were pretending for the very highest status positions. This aspect is clearly expressed in several traditional accounts from Baban times, where the brave hero of modest birth in the critical moment, when he could have achieved the highest position, «knows his place» and is later rewarded by the Baban Pasha. (E. g. a story of Salim Beg, who was offered the position as ruler of Southern Kurdistan by the Persian Nadir Shah). But the Baban family itself is said to be descended from Fakka Hamma Derishman, who owned no more than one small village in Pushdir.

In the tribal system, there enters the additional factor that descent from the apical ancestor of the lineage is a theoretical prerequisite for membership in the group, and thus for political power in it. Even this basic principle of organization can be circumvented, however, if a person appears who by high status or de-facto power can control the group.

An obvious example is the Jaf confederacy, where the *Begzada* do not claim common descent with all the *tiras* in the confederacy, but none the less occupy a position of unquestioned authority. Other examples are found in the recent history of the Hamawands, who for a while followed the Jaf *Begzada*, later the Berezinje Shaikhs a

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the time of Shaikh Said and Shaikh Mahmud. Thus, while no one who is not a member of the lineage can achieve a position within the segmentary lineage system, the lineage group as a whole, or even a section of it, temporarily broken away from the remainder of the descent group, can join a larger confederacy under a «foreign» leader.

In summary, one might say that there are no *absolute* impediments, or, inversely, necessary requirements, relating to leadership in any of the Southern Kurdish political systems; that persons theoretically may qualify for leadership by any combination of part-statuses, so long as they add up to a total status position sufficiently exhalted to correspond to, or «justify», the political and other demands involved in leading the group in question.

INCOMPATIBILITY OF PART-STATUSES

Clearly, only ascribed status positions, based on sex and birth, could function as true impediments to leadership. Various achieved status positions may be incompatible with high political positions, but since such status positions can be changed, they are at most temporary impediments, and can better be discussed under the present heading.

Most of these incompatibilities have been suggested above. Of the part-statuses in the religious field, the *mullah* will tend to be rather separated from the general village community — he is frequently a tenant farmer, but rarely occupies any other part-status position, with the occasional exception of *Hadji*. Membership in a *derwish* brotherhood is clearly a badge of low class, and the derwish will not occupy any of the higher status positions. Conversely, the title of *Hadji* is a badge of high status, and is combined with any of the higher part-status positions, including that of the mullah. A woman can not be a mullah.

The hierarchy of class, as implied in the discussion, seems to divide the local community into separable categories that do not significantly overlap in terms of prestige or general position in the village and supra-village hierarchy.

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him by overstepping his «reasonable» area of free grace in his relation to them.

In thinking about social relations, this essentially involves substituting the word «reasonable» for «right» — the latter being rigid and absolute, the former being defined in terms of numerous considerations of the specific situation. Obviously, different individuals with different temperament, experience, and values will have various ideas of what is «reasonable» — consequently, any type of superordination that does not involve constant face-to-face relations with the subordinates must be an uneasy one — hence the importance of the bodyguard, even for the more minor Kurdish leaders.

In the case of conflicting loyalties, the specific situation in the village and area concerned decides which group identification takes precedence. This is clearly illustrated in choices between identification with, or loyalties to, the landlord, the lineage or kin group, and the village community. How completely considerations of power override general rules of loyalty is finally illustrated by conflicts within the family of the old Baban Pashas.

Lineage group vs. lord. In the Kurdish tribal system, genealogical and local groups coincide, and these groups are also the organizational units in a formal political sense. A somewhat similar correspondance is characteristic of the non-tribal tenant villages. Thus, since they coincide, the relative importance of the identification with the kin group and with the political unit, as personified by the political officeholder or lord, can not easily be determined. Only in the rather unusual cases where the two are different, do problems of identification and precedence arise.

An example of the relative powers of the landowner vs. the lineage leader is offered by the *Barai Gawra* group, settled on the land of Shaikh Mahmud as tenant farmers. The Barai Gawra are one of ten branches of the *Merwai tira*, the *Ra'is* of which is Said Ali Khobar of Suleimani.

Formally, the position of the *Ra'is* is quite similar to that in other *tiras*, though more directly dependent on «democratic» approval. Succession is decided by a council of the important men of the ten villages. This council is limited by informal controls, being open to

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any one of the *tira* who «feels important enough». The qualifications 571
of the *Raiz* are that he must be experienced, old, and rich (receiving 622
no remuneration for his services), and in fact be acclaimed by a majority of his followers. His field of power, on the other hand, is minimal, and concerns only the relations between the various Memni villages. Considering that these are spread over a large area, and that the *Raiz* has no way of enforcing his decisions, he constitutes little more than a mediator in intra-tribal affairs.

Two of the Memni villages lie on the land of Shaikh Mahmud, 571
and are as completely under his control as are his non-tribal tenants. Shaikh Mahmud freely appoints the village headman himself, and collects the normal shares in tax — according to one critical old woman of the village, he frequently takes considerably more too! In the rather inconceivable case of conflict between the *Raiz*, with no formal powers, and Shaikh Mahmud, with the power to evict and fine the villagers, there is little doubt whose orders would be followed. The Shaikh even has the primary loyalties of many of the Baroi — the most succinct statement of the Kurd's attitude to his leader was made by the farmer-mullah of the village: «When Shaikh Mahmud was a religious leader, I was a mullah. He became King, I became a rifleman. Now he is a landowner, I am a farmer.» This does not leave very much to the *Raiz*.

There is thus a contradiction between the feudal hierarchy of which Shaikh Mahmud is the head, based on considerations of locality and economic relations, and the genealogically defined tribal organization, relating these two villages to the other Memni villages. This lineage organization is still retained, and headed by the *Raiz*. But the extent of the *Raiz*'s power is minimal, whereas the landowner's *de facto* power is necessarily considerable; the presence of these de facto powers has been fully recognized, and loyalties shifted accordingly. Because of the rigidity of the Kurdish lineage system, no modification of its form has been possible; the field in which it is relevant has simply been reduced.

In effect, this may also be seen as a situation of conflict between two *leaders*, each heading an organization. Since organizational hierarchies are in terms of individuals and not abstract offices, the

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102 Accordingly the description which follows applies primarily to Area A of the foregoing description. Prior to the opening of the road it might indeed have been possible to treat this district as a single culture area, virtually self contained. Under present conditions however economic factors and the external political authority link the three regions, A, B and C, closely together. I will attempt to make clear as I proceed the degree to which generalisations derived primarily from a study of the Balik and Dergala tribes can be regarded as generally applicable to the whole region. I will conclude this section with a rather more detailed description of the groups inhabiting Area A. Map 2.

101 The Surun group whose full tribal name is Surani Bagawada (i.e. "descendants of the Bags of Surun") are few in number. The 622 group is a single unit (taifa), the paramount of which is the Agha of Dergala - Mir Hamid Amin Beg.

The Balik tribe is a very much larger group and is subdivided into three clans, usually named Mallasherifi, Shevtini and Bakri, of which Mallasherifi is much the largest. The Shevtini group centred around Bayat has a considerable degree of cohesion and accepts the Agha of Bayat - Ali Agha - as paramount. The Mallasherifi on the other hand though nominally owing allegiance to the Agha of Valash - Sheikh Mohammed Agha - appear in practice to be split into three groups centred on Valash, Bost and Galala. The Bakri are a small group about which I know nothing. Sheikh Mohammed Agha by virtue of his position as head of the largest clan is considered by the government to be Agha paramount of all the Baliki; at the present time however his authority is nominal outside the immediate sphere of influence of his own village of Valash.

794 The two villages of Khalan and Ibim i Sheikh require special 162 mention. (See Map pp. ??? and ??? where Khalan is called Dar ul Aman). 439 The heads of these two villages, *Sheikh Alauddin and Sheikh Taidullah, are leaders of the mystic sect known as Nakhchwandi, which has its basis in Bokhara. The villages are really hospices belonging to this order. Apart from the adherents of the religious community the population is very mixed, traders predominating. The marked prosperity of the community is not hard to understand. At least two large armed convoys of smugglers passed over the border even during the course of my three day visit. They even offered to take me with them, but discretion unfortunately prevented my acceptance.

604 * These two individuals described as 'cousins' by Hay are really nephew and uncle respectively although nearly the same age. It is the nephew, Alauddin, who has the greater reputation and influence.

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The Class Agha

The gund Aghas' relations to their tenants has now been defined; they in turn owe allegiance to the Agha of the taifa. This individual also may glibly claim to own all the land of all the gunds under his suzerainty, but his ownership is of a much more nominal variety than that of the gund Agha. The taifa Agha does not levy any specific charge upon his underlings but rather receives from them gifts in proportion to his usefulness. Thus Hamid Amin Agha of Banyarian, even though he belonged to the same tira as Sheikh Mohammed Agha of Qalash head of the Hillasharifi and nominal paramount of all the Balis, did not admit that the latter was in any general sense his superior; though Sheikh Mohammed for his part claimed that Hamid Amin was his vassal. This discrepancy I think is only partly due to the recent lessening of political ties. In general it would appear that prior to the coming of the external administration the function of the taifa Agha was roughly that of arbitrator and court of appeal rather than dominating overlord. He seems to have been called in to arbitrate in small scale feuds, settle disputes between neighbouring villages over grazing rights and water, settle diverse disputes and so forth. For these services he would be suitably recompensed by the parties to the disputes.

This system of justice was doubtless exceedingly corrupt by European standards, but probably worked tolerably well. It is not clear what sanctions could be employed to enforce judiciary decisions of this sort. Today the claimant is encouraged to short-circuit the traditional machinery of the Aghas' courts and appeal for justice direct to the police. To some extent the two systems continue to operate side by side but with the continual lessening of the Aghas' authority litigation tends more and more to be a matter for the external administration only. I tried to obtain some opinions as to the relative efficiency of the old system and the new. The results were interesting. It was admitted that the decisions of the Agha in the old days were somewhat arbitrary, being based on considerations of wealth and nepotism rather than moral right, but at least a decision was arrived at quickly. The modern procedure on the other hand though plainly well intentioned is considered in practice to be slow, complicated and costly, and since the wealthier litigant can nearly always manage to appeal to a higher court if the first decision goes against him, the "justice" is nearly as one sided as before. Moreover it was argued that the police were just as corrupt as the Aghas with the disadvantage that, whereas formerly the Aghas were to some extent limited in their decisions by kinship obligations, the police had no interest at all except to sell justice to the highest bidder. Though this is certainly an overstatement of the case, many of the Iraqi police do appear to be exceedingly corrupt. So much so in fact that the new Qa'im Maqam of Rowanduz, chief magistrate of the district, was generally acclaimed by all as the almost unique example of a sincere

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627 692 and honest administrator. The venality of the junior police officers has probably an important effect upon the economic status, and hence the influence of the Aghas. The position was put to me thus by Hamid Amin Agha of Dergala. "In the old days" he said "all my followers gave me presents; nowadays few can afford to, they must keep in well with the police and then they have nothing left for me".

• 622 721 In earlier times the taifa Agha was probably in a position to organise small scale military activities; even today this would appear to be partly true. I was told for instance that in 1936 Ali Agha of Bayat, head of the Shevdini, had led his men across the border and sacked a Persian police post in reprisal for the latter having impounded some of his clansmens' cattle. Naturally such incidents are strongly disapproved of by the authorities.

The Tribal Agha

619 622 "In the case of the Balik, as we have seen, the Agha of the largest taifa, Mullasherifi, is also Agha paramount of the whole tribe, and this is doubtless the normal rule. His function as tribal Agha does not ever seem to have amounted to very much except in time of war, in which case he automatically became leader of the whole group and doubtless received economic benefits accordingly. In time of peace he only receives small token payments, such as gifts of fruit and the like, from his more remote subordinates.

[721] The evidence concerning the actual behaviour of the Balik during the disturbed times of 1914-1920 is contradictory. Sheikh Mohammad asserts that he led his people to a victorious massacre of the invading Russian army; Hamid Amin of Nanpuria on the other hand says that Sheikh Mohammad ran away and that it was he Hamid Amin who saved the remnants of the Balik from annihilation and finally routed the Russians. Whatever really happened, it seems clear that Sheikh Mohammad as head of the Mullasherifi ought to have led the Balik to war, whether he actually did so or not.

The first effect of contact with the external administration was certainly to increase the influence of the tribal Agha at the expense of his fellows. Thus Hay ingenuously remarks (p. 67) "The tribal chief has many obligations towards his tenants and tribesmen, the most important of which is that he will become their spokesman in all matters which concern the Government". The British

[731] "Hay (p. 68) states that it is the custom to present the paramount chief with a pregnant ewe from every considerable flock at the beginning of the year. Hay however makes no distinction between tribes and clans and the obligation may be towards the Agha of the taifa rather than the ashiret.

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Administration moreover adopted the Turkish expedient of paying the tribal Aghas an annual salary provided they kept their tribe in order. This procedure undoubtedly gave the tribal Aghas an altogether disproportionate economic influence, and has had various repercussions which will be discussed further in the next chapter. 619 622

The salary awarded to Sheikh Mohammed of Balash was stopped some years ago and, as might be expected, his influence as tribal leader declined rapidly. As is evidenced by the rival claims of the Aghas of Bayat and Bunt noted above, the Balik has scarcely any functioning unity as a tribe at the present time, though Sheikh Mohammed with a wide sweep of his arm, still declares that all the land belongs to him and that the taifas of Shevtin and Sukr are only there on sufferance. At the present moment (1938) his prestige is probably on the upgrade since he has recently been appointed a "member of Parliament" and regularly attends the legislative assemblies in Baghdad. The appointment carries with it a small salary, but its real importance so far as the tribes are concerned is that it demonstrates that the holder is in favour with the Mutasarrif and with the Baghdad Authorities. 619 622 554

Kinship Structure

While I have here sketched out the superficial political structure of the community the real nature of the relationship between the various Aghas and their followers can only be understood in terms of kinship.

The essentially conditional nature of the Aghas' authority was only vaguely understood by the earlier British Administrators. Ely for instance remarks (p. 67) "The Aghas are very oppressive to their tenants, more especially where the Government is close at hand and can assert its authority. In the mountain districts the tribesmen are exceedingly poor, they have little to fear from the Government, and their chief finds it difficult to coerce them. A rival chief would probably soon appear if he did". This statement brings out the fact, already well known from examples in the African field, that Government support for "the Chief" frequently gives that individual a tyrannical authority quite foreign to the ordinary tribal system of government, but it does not explain the Aghas normal relationship to his followers.

Marriage of Consanguines

As we have seen already the taifa is essentially a patrilineal clan. It is moreover largely endogamous by virtue of the system of ortho-cousin marriage common to most Mohammedan societies. Reference to the tables of Kinship Terminology at the end of this book 614 582 000

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In the ideal, the Kurdish family which maintains ortho-cousin marriage and does not require the wife to change her place of residence on marriage forms what may be termed a "fratrilocal" group. Brothers are close neighbours or even share the same house. They frequently work their landholdings jointly, perhaps even in cooperation with their cousins. The marriage of ortho-cousins clearly serves to simplify and perpetuate such cooperation. Moreover in such a case the bride-price, whatever its nominal amount - and the Kurds are keen to flatter their wives by asserting that they have paid a quite fabulous price for them, - is in practice nothing but a sort of book entry, a transfer of assets from the right hand to the left. Even where the marriage to father's brother's daughter does not take place, there is still a strong tendency for a man to marry a girl from his own village - i.e. a classificatory "ortho-cousin" - if for no other reason than that the Agha must approve of all marriages and he has an obvious interest in keeping the group as closely unified as possible. Besides, a man of the commoner class would normally have comparitively few opportunities of either meeting or bargaining for a girl from another village, still less for a girl of another clan or tribe. Startling romances and elopements do take place, but they are the exception and are usually followed by a long and bloody trail of vengeance. For the commoner the general rule of marriage within the taifa is fairly well maintained. In this connection the building of the road will probably have important consequences for the Balik in the near future, since the ordinary tribesman can now [illegible] more readily make contact with groups other than his own immediate kinsfolk.

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Marriage of Aghas

The foregoing applies however only to the marriage arrangements of commoner families (kurmanj). Quite different are the conditions that govern the marriage of the son of an Agha. Mohammedan law permits a man to have four wives at a time, and to effect divorce simply by the pronouncement of the word taleq three times. In practice scarcely any of the commoners among the Balik can afford more than one wife, and polygyny is the almost exclusive prerogative of the Aghas. The marriage to father's brother's daughter serves to simplify and concentrate the inheritance of cattle, implements and other items of 'capital' equipment within the economic working unit of the group household and to avoid friction over the inheritance of tenancy rights. But the Agha is not swayed by considerations of inheritance since, in the limited sense already described, he 'owns' all the available land anyway and there is no question of splitting up the territory at death. His aim rather is to gain prestige and live at peace with his neighbours. We find therefore that the marriages of Aghas tend to take the form of political alliances, rather after the style of the royal marriages of mediaeval Europe. Sheikh Mohammed Agha of Walash for instance, who in the course of a long life has had 9 wives and 15 surviving children, appears to be related either by marriage or

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622 581 through the marriage of his sons to nearly every important leader, tribal, religious, or townsman, within fifty miles radius. More humble Aghas are content with one or two alliances with neighbouring notables, while the rest of their offspring are married off to members of their own community, thus further strengthening the bonds of kinship between the Agha and his followers. It is interesting to examine the effect of this in greater detail.

> Sheikh Mohammad of Walash was one of 9 surviving brothers; he himself has had nine wives and has six surviving sons, and several daughters
>
> Mir Hamid Amin of Dergala has had 6 wives and 24 children of which there survive 9 sons and 5 daughters.

If we consider the male side of the tree only, it would appear that the average reproduction rate of a 'princely' Agha is of the order of 8 surviving sons. If we assume that the total population of the villages remains very roughly stationary we must reach the conclusion that the effective birthrate is very heavily loaded in favour of the Aghas. The effect of this would seem to be that in many of the smaller villages the Agha is not only of the same clan as nearly everyone but actually quite closely related to about half the population. I was unable to make any accurate census of a village but my observations at *Walash were I think reasonably accurate, and tend to confirm this calculation.

622 592 There appeared to be twelve separate households, of which four are accounted for by the Agha's fortress and the establishments of his third and fourth married sons and of a brother. (The two eldest sons have been established as Aghas in their own right over neighbouring villages). The population I estimated at ninety, in the proportion twenty five men, thirty women, thirty five children. The Aghas household appeared to consist of about twenty persons including his younger children and personal servants; while the households of his married sons and his brother contained about eight persons each. In this case therefore quite half the population of the gund was in immediate kinship or economic relationship with the Agha. The case may be exceptional, but serves to explain why a rental of 50% of the yield of the land does not in practice prove entirely extortionate.

622 614 114 Comparison of these observations and those of Hay

The foregoing account shows the interrelationship of the political and kinship organisation among the Balik Kurds. As a commentary upon sociological method it is interesting to note what

*This village would appear to be fairly average so far as size is concerned, though centres such as Dergala and Merga are vastly larger. Walash however is in some respects the private fortress of Sheikh Mohammad and its kinship organisation may not be typical.

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happens when the same empirical facts are considered without an adequate appreciation of the sociological significance of kinship. The following quotations illustrate the position of the Agha as understood by Hay.

The first is reasonable enough:-

(p. 65) A tribe is a community or federation of communities which exists for the protection of its members against external aggression and for the maintenance of the old racial customs and standards of life. Some tribes have no recognised chiefs some have many.

The second is more hypothetical:-

(p. 65/66) The position of the chief varies greatly in different tribes. In the remoter mountains, though granted the most ungrudging obedience, he is distinctly one of the tribesmen, the leading member of a family which has won its headship through military prowess. Lower down he often belongs to an entirely separate caste, and comes from a different stock to the tribesmen. The large tribes are divided into sections, and in different tribes we find many sections with the same names. This points to the fact that the sections represent the original owners of the soil, while the present chiefs belong to powerful families who have invaded their domains and siezed their lands. This is notably the case with the Dizai where nearly all the land belongs to one powerful family, against which a few old tribal Aghas and headmen still maintain an unequal struggle. Here the chief is a landlord, and the system that prevails is feudal rather than tribal.

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The statement that in the foothill and plains area the Aghas are frequently of different stock to their villagers is valid and has already been commented upon in Chapter 1. The idea that the taifas "represent the original owners of the soil", while the paramount tribal Aghas are conquering overlords is mere fantasy; while as for the Dizai the facts seem to be that the tribe itself is "all one family" (taifa) while the land is mostly held by town dwelling landlords who have no kinship affiliations with the Dizai at all. While this lineage distinction between Agha and tenant is valid for the plains area, it does not apply to the tribal districts. The following for instance is quite absurb:-

(Hay, p. 42) In the bigger tribes the Aghas, whose families have for many generations been entirely disassociated from manual labour, are of a far finer type than the peasants.

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Such generalisations may lead to some startling sociological conclusions:-

> (p.221) This village (Merga; Map 2) lies just below Sheikh Mohammad Agha's residence (Walash) in the Balik country, and its inhabitants, some fifty families in number, are nearly all his relations. Being of 'chiefly' descent they consider it beneath their dignity to cultivate the soil; they have therefore only two means of livelihood, sponging on Sheikh Mohammad Agha who pays them most of his salary to keep them quiet, and looting and taking toll from the caravans that pass along the Persian Road.

This paragraph I consider most illuminating. For it is precisely on the basis of such evidence that the British policy of 'military pacification' is carried out on all the outlying frontiers of Empire. The tribesmen just beyond the border are always, it seems, "desperate bandits and brigands" intent on plundering the innocent peasantry within the jurisdiction of the British raj. Hay of course does not intentionally deceive. He had only seen Merga from afar and was merely recording the position as outlined to him by Sheikh Mohammad. In giving this account however Sheikh Mohammad was fairly obviously blackmailing the British Administrator for more money, and was probably himself responsible for the particular piece of brigandage complained of. Merga today has one of the most extensive cultivations of the whole district, and is considered a prosperous village. There seems no reason to suppose that the position was radically different in 1920, even though the ravages of war had temporarily disorganised the agricultural arrangements of the whole area.

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This is not special pleading on behalf of the villagers of Merga or of the Kurds in general, but it is time that their nefarious activities were seen in proper proportion. It must be admitted that prior to the establishment of an external Authority most Kurdish tribes freely resorted to brigandage on every possible occasion. It was a socially approved aspect of inter-tribal life and one upon which the Kurds themselves lay great emphasis in folk tale and tradition. But it is this very emphasis that has led to the fabulous distortions that appear in all accounts of Kurdish life either lay or official. To read the literature one must suppose that in former times the majority of Kurdish communities lived solely on the proceeds of plunder and ransom; and while the Government continues its present policy of cultural suppression such fallacies are obviously convenient. But the unbiased observer cannot avoid the conclusion that most of the more spectacular exploits of Kurdish brigandage are products of the Kurds' own imagination. Seen in their proper scale these warlike activities can never have been more than an exciting gloss upon the normal balanced cycle of agricultural economics.

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Points of Analysis calling for Further Study

The foregoing analysis has thrown emphasis on the fact that the Agha is of the same kinship group as the majority of his followers and very closely related to many of them. It was interesting to note that in conversation Mir Hamid Amin of Dergala differentiated between "Khesm khoisana" (my relatives) and "kurmanj" (peasantry), but I doubt whether there is any precise dividing line between the two classifications. I noted that he included in the former term at least some of his second cousins. The practical distinction seemed to be that his khesm were allowed to sit in his guest house by right while the kurmanj could only do so by special invitation. Linguistically there appeared to be a confusion between the terms kurmanj and muakeyn both of which were translated to me as arabic fellahin (peasant). In this area however there is considerable overlapping between the two Kurdish dialects of Kirmanji and Kurdi and the confusion is probably only due to my linguistic incompetence.

Another point that requires further examination is the precise inheritance of the title Agha. We have seen that from the point of view of political organisation each gund has at any time one, and only one, Agha, in the sense of landlord. The succession however does not necessarily follow the rule of primogeniture. As it happens both Sheikh Mohammad Agha of Walash and Ali Agha of Rayat have living with them in the same village brothers who are older than themselves. In the former case the elder brother leads a retired life and takes no part in village affairs; in the latter Abdullah Agha who lives in Ali Agha's house in Rayat throughout the winter moves off into the mountains in the summer with the sheep and goats and a few of the villagers and establishes his own hoba (settlement of black tents). But though Abdullah is the elder brother there is never any suggestion that anyone but Ali Agha is head of the group. On the other hand though the Agha of Rayat is quite definitely Ali Agha the title is much more widely distributed as a form of address. Thus in Rayat the old chief Ali, his brother, his two nephew's Kharim and Ali and presumably his adult son also (who was away during my visit) are all given the title Agha in ordinary speech. And this seems to be the normal usage, thus Hamid Amin's brother in Nawpurdan is known as Rasul Agha though he does not function as a landlord, and Sheikh Mohammad Agha's four eldest sons all carry the title. What is not clear is how the title is inherited as the lineage spreads, for instance will the sons of Kharim, who will in their time presumably be second cousins of the reigning Agha of Rayat also carry the title? Probably there is no definite rule.

In the remainder of this book where I refer to the Agha or the Aghas of a particular group I shall imply only those individuals who fulfil the sociological function of the Agha, and not any sons or near relatives who happen to bear the same title. The sociological function of the gund Agha can be quite clearly defined. He is the

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622 landlord of the soil - by which title he receives rent, and he supports the village Guest House. As we shall see later these two functions are closely interrelated.

000 Social Organisation Areas other than Balik

As explained earlier my information for groups other than the Balik must be treated with reserve. The following notes may however prove of value to further students of the area.

621 177 Area B. It would appear that the tribes of this area such as the Surchi and the Khushnao were originally organised on much the same lines as described above but that owing to their relatively long period of contact with an external administration the social forms have now become blurred. The general tendency seems to be for the land to become the property of absentee landlords having no kinship relation with their tenants. The villages moreover lack the clan homogeneity noticeable among the Balik.

621 Area C. Mention has already been made of the principle settled tribes of this area, the Dizai and the Girdi. With the Dizai as recorded by Hay the organisation is feudal rather than tribal, since the village Aghas are not of the same kin group as their tenants. I was told that "all the Dizai call each other amosa" implying, if true, that the whole tribe consists of one taifa only. With the Girdi the position appears to be somewhat different. Jemil Agha, their paramount chief, is himself a Girdi but is a townsman in habit and holds himself very much aloof from his followers.

361 312 In its technological aspects the plains culture differs markedly from that of the hills, especially as regards housebuilding and agricultural equipment. An important sociological difference is that, owing to the limited water supply, the position of the village sites is determined and limited by the occurrence of water holes, and the villages in consequence are larger than those found in the hills. From the size of the surrounding cemetery and from archaeological considerations it would appear that some such sites (Bahrika for instance) have been in continuous occupation for several thousand years.

The Nomads

621 Though my information is extremely scanty the indications are that the social organisation of tribes such as the Herki differs in many respects from that of the settled tribes. In terminology the term kabila appears to correspond to ashiret and khel to taifa but the identity may not be exact. The term hoba corresponds to gund and implies a small settlement of tents in one location. This last term is also used by the settled peoples. Thus among the Shevdini

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CHAPTER 3

The Guest House

622 So far we have been mainly concerned with describing the relative social positions of the different individuals that go to make up the Kurdish tribal community. It is now necessary to consider these same relationships on an institutional plane and to examine more specifically the economic context in which they operate.

I have defined the position of the village Agha in functional terms as (a) the individual who 'owns' the land and who receives rent by virtue of that title and (b) the individual responsible for the upkeep of the Guest House. We must now examine this definition more carefully.

574 622 554 It is a cardinal feature of Kurdish custom that the stranger, whatever his rank and position, is entitled to free board and lodging at the expense of the Agha. The more lavish the Agha's hospitality the greater the esteem of his fellows; so much so that the prestige a man gains by virtue of being a good and generous host may in terms of reputation fully discount disadvantages of birth. Hamid Amin Agha of Nampurdan for example though only a poor man and a fairly distant cousin of the ruling chief of his clan has a tremendous reputation throughout the district simply on account of his hospitality. On all sides it was maintained that he was much more of a man (piao - the Kurdish idiom is the same as our own) than his nominal overlord Sheikh Mohammed Agha of Walash. If Hamid Amin was not so generous, it was argued, he also would be rich and powerful; *Sheikh Mohammad was miserly and an old woman. It must be admitted that a mere reputation for generosity may not bring with it any particular tangible reward in the form of economic advantage or practical influence. But the pattern of the society is such that this form of reputation is esteemed above all others, and it is in the light of this set of values that the institution of the Guest House must be considered.

344 574 352 †In the Balik country the Guest House is seldom actually a house. Winter travellers are few and can be accommodated if necessary somewhere in the Agha's own residence; during the summer on the other hand a shady pergola is erected somewhere close to the Agha's house and furnished with carpets, seats and cushions. It is here that the traveller is expected to take his meals and sleep.

* This incidentally seems to have been Sheikh Mohammad's reputation throughout his life: see Hay p. 253.

† In the plains villages however the great heat of the summer and the greater frequency of winter travellers necessitates a permanent building for the Guest House. For description see Hay 47 - 49.

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Among semi-nomadic groups such as the Shevdini who spend their summer in black tents the 'Guest House' is a portion of the Aghas tent specially partitioned off for the purpose. This corresponds to Arab bedouin usage. The Agha himself spends much of his day in and about the Guest House and directly supervises the ordering of the meals which he suitably adjusts according to the dignity of his visitor. The actual preparation of the meals is in the hands of the womenfolk, but properly speaking these should never themselves appear in the Guest House. If the visitor has any social eminence the Agha will either sleep in the Guest House himself as a kind of protection, or else depute one of his sons to do so. 342 574 622.

But what concerns us here is not so much the description of the Guest House as such, but rather its economic and social significance. 574 431

The hospitality offered is free and theoretically unlimited, but in practice any individual of low rank who overstayed his welcome would soon be made conscious of the fact. For those of higher status custom dictates that the visitor should offer his host a substantial gift immediately after the preliminary introductions. I have no information as to the scale of such presents in normal Kurdish usage. In my own case since I was anxious to establish my good name with all concerned, both gifts and hospitality received were probably on an exaggerated scale. I had to rely upon the advice of my interpreter for the quality and quantity of the goods I offered. In kind they included sugar, tea, coffee, cloth, matches, soap and cigarette paper, much the most important item being sugar. The quantities varied according to the length of my intended stay and the eminence of my host. Thus Sheikh Mohammad of Walash received proportionately more than his nominal vassal Hamid Amin of Nawpurdan. On average my board and lodging together with that of my interpreter cost me a sack of sugar (36 Kilos) a week.

The Expenditure of the Agha

The procedure raises the interesting question as to whether or not it is profitable to run a Guest House. From the Kurdish viewpoint the Guest House represents an enormous drain upon the Agha's resources, but this attitude is to be expected since the more the Agha can persuade his neighbours that he is being made bankrupt by the lavishness of his hospitality the greater will be his reputation. Sheikh Mohammad Agha of Walash for instance was particularly insistent that his Guest House was bringing him to the edge of ruin, and I questioned him closely on the matter. I noted that while he included under Guest House expenditure a variety of items that were purely personal; in reckoning income he took no account at all of gifts received. To take an example he complained that for the upkeep of his Guest House he was having to feed thirty people and kill at least a kid a day. On trying to discover how he had arrived at this figure 574 556 622.

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in olden times, and that the economy of the village will not stand the strain. 511

Much point is lent to this by the fact that Ali Agha of Rayat (head of the Shevdini), who being a nominal subordinate of Sheikh Mohammad received no Government subsidy, has remained a simple tribesman with few tendencies towards sophistication. Moreover, far from lamenting the new order he seems to find the present times extremely prosperous and is eagerly pressing his claims with the Government to have the Shevdini land registered in his own name, so that he can establish his people's claim to be an ashiret in their own right instead of merely a taifa of the Balik. It seems significant too that the Shevdini, who alone have never had to undergo the economic shock of temporary Government support, appear to be today much the most integrated group in the sociological sense. 178 434 [622]

One further generalisation emerges from this analysis. We noted earlier that of the food consumed by the village, the only items that must be purchased by cash are sugar, tea, coffee and in some cases rice. We noted further that practically the whole of this expenditure was incurred by the Agha in connection with the maintenance of the Guest House and his own household. Now from our analysis of other forms of cash expenditure we see that these too fall almost exclusively on the Agha rather than the commoner. The Agha's expenditure thus differs from that of the commoner not only in volume but also very largely in kind. This distortion has important bearings for our further analysis.

Economic Balance of the Village Community

Of the various village groups in the area here described it is scarcely possible to select any single community as typical, so far as agricultural production is concerned. While all the groups are interested in approximately the same range of products, what might be called the 'emphasis of production' varies considerably. One village may specialise in fruit growing, another in wheat, another in tobacco and so on. This differentiation arises partly from geographical considerations - such as altitude, water supply, soil fertility - and partly from the conservative prejudices of the Aghas concerned. Owing to the increased trading contacts opened up since the coming of the road, and the need to satisfy newly developed wants for imported "luxury" goods the whole structure of the economic organisation of these hill people is undergoing very rapid change and readjustment. The individual variations as between different villages at the present time depend in the main upon the degree to which this readjustment to changed external circumstances has already taken place. It should be borne in mind therefore that the synthetic account of this process of change in the following few pages, though valid in general terms if applied to the district as a whole, is not necessarily applicable to any single village community. 621 311 433

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433 being self sufficient in his production, trading only that which is
249 surplus to his requirements. Under the new conditions the local
178 production of cereals will be inadequate and the difference will have to be made up by trading tobacco for wheat. Thus for the first time the ordinary commoner will be forced to evaluate his basic foodstuffs in terms of a cash economy - and this may have serious consequences. Under present conditions tobacco is so enormously valuable (in terms of cash) compared with any other Kurdish production that some well favoured villages may come to rely on this crop to the exclusion of all others, thus making the welfare of the community dependent upon fluctuations in the price of tobacco on the Baghdad market, - hardly a desirable development.

249 The social consequences of an increase in tobacco cultivation
427 may be equally drastic. Consider for instance the matter of rents.
435 In a previous section I have suggested that the commoner normally pays his Agha 50% of the yield of his land; and this is evidently no great hardship since the commoner family lives satisfactorily on the remaining 50%. Moreover in terms of cash the rental does not represent very much - at 1938 prices, a ton of wheat would purchase locally only just over 50 kilos of sugar. But under the new system not only will the commoner be unable to satisfy his own food requirements without resort to trade, but a 50% rental would, relatively speaking, be worth its weight in gold, - with the added exasperation that the commoner who trades tobacco will for the first time find himself under a direct tax obligation to the Government. There is little doubt that in such circumstances 'rents' would be reduced. In my view the general levelling up of financial status as between commoner and Agha which would result from this process would be entirely fatal to the existing tribal organisation.

249 On the analogy with the lowland areas the ultimate line of
622 evolution is indeed clear. The Agha finds it increasingly
425 difficult to maintain his obligations of kinship and hospitality; he falls into debt and eventually by some trick of the law the tribal land is mortgaged to pay the bill; thereafter the new Agha is merely a landlord with no personal ties with the community - the process of tribal dissolution may to all intents and purposes be regarded as complete.

249 From the Government's point of view such a development is not
464 entirely undesirable. A completely detribalised community is in many respects easier to administer than a tribal one, at least in the short term view. And there are still wider factors effecting the situation. The labour for the Kirkuk oil fields is largely supplied

* This is theoretically impossible, since by Iraq definition tribal land is miri land. Nevertheless the process of alienation has in the past clearly taken place in the plains and foothill areas.

311 241 421 denied this. My information however on the actual topographical arrangement of individual holdings is definitely unsatisfactory. From the evidence it would appear that each working group of commoners must hold in separate plots at least the following:- one patch of vegetable garden, one patch of tobacco cultivation, one patch of wheat and one patch of fallow. But my informants never formulated the position to me in this manner. The problem is linked up with the question of inheritance concerning which my first hand evidence is very slight. As I have shown, it appears that so far as land is concerned the injunctions of the Koran have scarcely even a nominal relevance. Granted however that the Agha as landlord has a nominal right to determine absolutely the inheritance of land tenure among his tenants, it is still far from clear how this works out in practice.

Rice

243 622 The rice cultivation seems usually to be the personal property of the Agha - this being true at least for Walash, Rayat and Dergala. I did not discover what particular individuals are conscripted to work this cultivation or how they are recompensed. It is extremely hard to understand why in a village such as Walash this cultivation is not turned over to tobacco. Sheikh Mohammad actually complained to me that one of the reasons he was so badly off compared with his enemy the Mir of Dergala was that the latter owing to better water supplies was also to grow so much more tobacco. Possible political reasons for this conservatism have been suggested in a previous section; another reason is psychological - from the Kurdish point of view it just is not sense to go short of food and rely on the proceeds of a cash crop to make up deficiencies. In this perhaps the Aghas show remarkable intuitive foresight.

The Mill

256 402 An institution which I have so far neglected but which is of more than merely technological significance is the mill. There is a mill associated with nearly all the larger villages. There are mills at Dergala, Rayat and Merga. Walash has none but there is one at Naupurdan. All are worked on the same principle which technologically speaking is very advanced. As may be seen from the diagram and photographs the machine is worked as a horisontal turbine and thus uses the 'velocity' head of the water instead of the weight as in the more usual types of water wheel. This has various technical advantages - for instance it disposes of the necessity for any gearing - and if the apparatus were 'precision made' there is no reason why it should not be highly efficient. Actually the crudity of the workmanship makes it impossible to work the machine at any great speed and the output is limited to about ½ ton of flour in 24 hours, working continuously. The operation of the machine is quite automatic and once started it requires only the minimum of attention.

free house and cultivation and from the commoners gifts in accordance with particular services rendered. He usually marries into the community concerned and his heirs will become ordinary kurmanj of the village. 793

It is difficult to assess what, in the norm, is his social position vis-a-vis the chief. He is one of those who has the run of the Agha's Guest House, a right otherwise reserved for strangers and near relatives (khesm), and he is always greeted with formal respect. But beyond that it is difficult to generalise. Ideally no doubt he should use his religious influence to back up the prestige and authority of his patron the Agha, but the facts seem at variance. The Mulla in Rayat was clearly the close confidant and right hand man of the Agha, he dined every evening in the Guest House and was present at all discussions. In Walash on the other hand the Mulla though frequently in the Guest House was treated as a person of small importance and I never saw him in conversation with the Agha. In Dergala again, the Mulla though admittedly a person of importance never came to the Guest House at all during the week of my stay and considerable precautions seemed to be taken that I should not meet him myself independently. In this case there was some definite source of friction between the Agha and the Mulla, though I do not know its nature. 793 554 622.

To sum up then it is clear that though the Mulla holds his land and his position as a direct fief from the Agha, his functions are such that he may yet gain considerable independent wealth and influence. In the old days it must have been necessary for the efficient working of the gund that the Mulla and the Agha should be in harmony and work in close collaboration. Under present conditions the attitude of the Mulla appears to be of less significance for the community as a whole

On the other hand it may well be that in the plains where the Agha is frequently an absentee landlord, the social influence of the Mulla is much greater than is at present the case among the hills. Hay for instance attaches much greater weight to the Mulla's influence than seems justifiable on my own evidence.

The Mosque

In Arabic the word masjid simply signifies a place of prayer. The essential constituents are an open courtyard where the faithful may assemble and a place for ritual ablutions. Historically the covered courtyards, the domes and the minarets are later accretions to the simpler form. In the cool of the hills the open courtyard has been maintained. In most of the villages the mosque is simple paved courtyard of slatestone, surrounded by stone seats with a spring or a fountain in the middle. The slatestone courtyard has the same sanctity as the floor of an ordinary mosque and the visitor must remove his shoes before stepping onto the stone. 778 [346]

778 his shoes before stepping onto the stone. Here the Mulla recites
771 prayers five times a day and those who feel like it join in. The
• 622 average commoner is very casual about his prayers; many do not pray at
782 all, those who do mostly pray only at sunset. The Aghas on the other hand are frequently excessively sanctimonious; of my acquaintances Hamid Amin of Dergala in particular made a tremendous fuss about his prayers and ritual washings. It was interesting to note that he would often break off in the middle, give orders to his servants, and then go on again where he left off. While one can have no insight into his
[554] real religious feelings, I got the impression that it was largely done for show. There is a definite prestige value attached to being a devout Mohammedan - it is the characteristic of a gentleman. In the same way the Aghas consistently make a show of being very strict about the seclusion and veiling of their womenfolk when strangers are present while commoners, if they bother at all, are lax and casual.

782 A man need not of course go to the mosque to pray. Each man's prayer mat is in effect his own mosque. The actual practice varies in different villages depending I fancy upon the example set by the Agha. Anyway I noticed that there was always a much higher attendance at prayers when the Agha was there in person. The conventions seem to be analogous to those of English churchgoing, there is a much bigger attendance on the Sabbath. The devout Hamid Amin of Dergala for instance said his prayers at home all the week but on Fridays attended at the mosque, and most of the village went too.

778 Some villages have a supplementary roofed building which is
346 used as a mosque during the winter, but this is not invariable. In the foothills area and on the plain the mosque is normally a roofed building with minaret attached. In this case prayers are held either within the covered courtyard or on the roof.

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Plate 1.
People. Young Kurdish Agha—a nephew of Ali Agha of Rayat.

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Plate 2.
People. Hamid Amin Agha of Naupurdan, his elder brother, and a visiting Mulla.

[opposite page 74 - A]

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101 131 648 In September 1941, the British and Soviet forces invaded Iran, toppling over the structure painfully erected by Reza Shah Pahlavi. As his soldiers scattered, they sold or surrendered their arms to the tribes which still roamed the desolate mountains of Iran, holding to their organization, mores, and way of life in spite of the old Shah's efforts to subdue them. Among those thus benefiting from the Iranian collapse were the Kurdish tribes occupying the mountains along the Iraqi and Turkish borders from Maku, in the shadow of Mount Ararat in the north, to Qasr-i-Shirin, on the Kermanshah-Baghdad road in the south.

In the north, the Kurdish tribes in the mountains west of Lake Urmieh found themselves contained by the strong Soviet garrisons in Rezaieh, Shahpur, Khoi, and Maku. In the absence of effective Iranian authority, the Soviets maintained direct relations with the tribes — the Jalali in the north, the Shikak in the mountains west of Shahpur, and the Herki west of Rezaieh. The chiefs of these tribes were allowed to manage their own affairs by the Soviets, who only required that they maintain security and provide grain for the Red Army. At the southern extreme of the Kurdish area, near the Kermanshah-Baghdad road — one of the main supply links between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union — British troops kept the tribes quiet.

622 668 It was in the large area between the British and Soviet forces, in the vacuum left by the fleeing Iranians, that the Kurds were able to regain their autonomy. At first the two main centers of disturbance were Merivan and the Avroman Mountains, where Mahmud Khan of Kani-Senan established a precarious hegemony; and Baneh, where Hama Rashid Khan, long in exile in Iraq, built up a principality which included Saqqiz and Sardasht. Both of these tribal chiefs were recognized for a time by the Iranian Government as semi-official governors of their areas, but were then driven into Iraq by the reorganized Iranian Army. By the fall of 1945, all of Kurdistan south of the Saqqiz-Baneh-Sardasht line was again firmly in government hands. The vacuum was thus reduced to the small area between this line and the Soviet forces based on Rezaieh, in which there was only one town of any size — Mahabad, formerly known as Sauj Bulagh, a few miles south of Lake Urmieh.

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177 668 Three impartially, the Komala moved inevitably into the Soviet orbit.

During this period VOKS, the Soviet international propaganda organization, was starting a number of "Iranian-Soviet Cultural Relations Societies" in all sections of Iran. As the Komala had grown too big to continue meeting in private homes, its leaders now asked the Soviets to found a branch in Mahabad; they hoped thus to obtain a place to meet without attracting too much attention. The Soviets readily complied, and it was founded, not as a branch of the Iranian-Soviet Relations Society, but as the "Kurdistan-Soviet Cultural Relations Society" (Anjoman-i-Farhangi-i-Kurdistan-u-Shuravi). The clubhouse was soon crowded with Kurds, who showed their gratitude to their new patrons by sending ten cases of cigarettes made of Kurdish tobacco to the victors of Leningrad.

186 536 668 It was at a ceremony in the society's clubhouse, in April 1945, that the Komala finally came into the open. The Soviet Consul from Rezaieh and the chief of VOKS in Azerbaijan were honored guests. The main feature of the program was an "opera" in which a woman called "Daik Nishteman" (Mother Native Land) was represented as abused by three ruffians, "Iraq," "Iran," and "Turkey," finally to be rescued by her stalwart sons. The audience, unused to dramatic representations, was deeply moved, and blood-feuds generations old were composed as life-long enemies fell weeping on each other's shoulders and swore to avenge Kurdistan.

177 • 622 668 At this ceremony the future head of the Kurdish state, Qazi Mohammad, was finally admitted to the party, to the gratification of the Soviets, who had not liked the democratic organization of the Komala and had long been looking for someone on whom they could count to lead it according to their suggestions. At first the Soviets, realizing the strength of the tribes, had approached tribal chiefs with requests to lead the nationalist movement. But only three of them commanded sufficient prestige for the task — Qaranei Agha Rais-ol-Ashair, venerable chief of the Mamesh and the acknowledged leader of the federation of which they were a part; Amr Khan Sharifi, chief of the Shikak and "grand old man" of Kurdistan; and Amir Asad of the Dehbokri, die-hard

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conservative who, as honorary chief of the gendarmerie, had been made responsible for security of the area by the Iranian Government. But Soviet overtures to each met only polite evasion.

Thus it was that the Soviets finally turned to Qazi Mohammad, hereditary judge and religious leader of Mahabad, and a member of its most respected family. They were frequent guests at his house and eventually helped him, through pressure on the Iranian Government, to replace Amir Asad as government representative in the area, by his brother Seif Qazi, who took over the title of Commander of the Gendarmerie. Qazi Mohammad is said to have learned of the Komala only about a year after its formation, when he sent emissaries discreetly offering his adherence. Komala leaders had decided not to admit him, fearing that because of his strong and authoritarian character and also because of the deference which they themselves had been accustomed since childhood to show him and his family, he would eventually dominate the party and end its democratic character. When at Soviet insistence the Komala finally did admit him, there came about precisely the result they feared — one-man rule of the party.

Qazi's admission enabled the Soviets to draw the Kurds rapidly into line with Soviet policy, which, by the summer of 1945, began to reflect the growing aggressiveness shown by the Soviets elsewhere. Previously the instrument of Soviet penetration in Iran had been the Tudeh Party, a popular front of Iranian left-wingers which, although successful in other parts of Iran, had never been able to take root in Kurdistan.[2] Now, however, the Soviets were considering a new and ambitious plan — the attachment of northwestern Iran to the Soviet Union. Accordingly they formed an independence party to replace the Tudeh in Azerbaijan, a party which could then without embarrassing the Tudeh in other parts of Iran stage a revolution, declare the province independent, and possibly request incorporation in the Soviet Union. Obedient to Soviet orders, the Tudeh abolished itself and re-formed as the "Democrat Party of Azerbaijan," whereupon it began to use Azerbaijani Turkish as its official language and to demand separation from Iran.

[2] For a discussion of the Tudeh Party, see George Lenczowski, "The Communist Movement in Iran," *Middle East Journal*, I (1947), pp. 29-45. [Source # 24]

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668 642 The fall of Tabriz was the cue for Qazi Mohammad to declare his own area independent — which it had long been in fact. On December 15 at a meeting in Mahabad attended by tribal chiefs, the leaders of the new Kurdish Democrat Party, Mulla Mustafa, and three Soviet officers in a jeep and armed with tommy-guns, he solemnly inaugurated the Kurdish People's Government and raised the Kurdish flag. A national parliament of thirteen members was formed, and on January 22, 1946, Qazi Mohammad was elected president of the new republic. The Minister of War was his cousin, Mohammad Hosein Khan Seif Qazi, a merchant whose military reputation rested on his honorary rank of captain in the Iranian gendarmerie. Seif Qazi, Mulla Mustafa, Amr Khan Shikak, Hama Rashid Khan Banei (just returned from Iraq with his tribesmen), and Zero Beg Herki [1] received the rank of "marshal," and were provided with Soviet uniforms, complete with high boots, stiff shoulder-straps, and red-banded garrison caps.[2]

578 668 The new government, which controlled only a minute territory including the towns of Mahabad, Bokan, Naqadeh, and Ushnuieh, sent observers to the opening of the Azerbaijan National Parliament and even convoked a miniature parliament of its own. It also dispatched Mulla Mustafa south to fight the Iranian garrisons in Saqqiz, Baneh, and Sardasht, cut off from each other and their base in Senandaj by the heavy winter snows.

RELATIONS WITH TABRIZ AND TEHRAN

Meanwhile in the north the capture of Rezaieh by the Azerbaijani Democrats brought new problems to the Kurdish government. Although the majority of the inhabitants of the plains west

177 622 624 645 [1] Zero Beg was a bandit chief originally associated with the famous Shikak rebel chief, Simitko. Upon the latter's defeat and murder by Reza Shah, Zero Beg fled to Iraq, returning in 1941 to carve out a domain for himself in the Barandus Valley. He was often seen with Soviet political officers and seems to have been their favored protégé. Although of little importance in his own tribe, the Herki, most of whom still followed their hereditary chiefs, these Soviet connections enabled him to play an important role in developments in Kurdistan.

[2] Other officials of the new government were Hajji Baba Shaikh, local religious leader, Prime Minister; Sadiq Haideri, Minister of Works and Propaganda; Nasuf Karimi, Minister of Education; Mohammad Amin Mu'ini, Minister of Commerce; Ahmad Ilahi, Minister of the Treasury; Seyyid Mohammad Tahazadeh, Minister of Health; and Khalil Khosrovi, Minister of the Interior. Only one of these men had been among the founders of the Komala, but all belonged to the middle or upper classes — small merchants, officials, landlords.

St Roosevelt G-S (1948-1947) 1947 MA11 Kurd MA11
Mahabad

Those who had an opportunity to meet Qazi Mohammad could not fail to be impressed with his personality, and easily understood how he had become a symbol for Kurdish nationalists everywhere. A short man of fifty, dressed in an old army overcoat, he had a lightly bearded, ascetic face, slightly yellowish in complexion from a stomach complaint. He neither smoked nor drank and ate very little. His voice was gentle and well-modulated, his gestures quiet but effective. Something of an internationalist, he was interested in all the peoples of the world and knew many languages, including Russian, a little English, and Esperanto. His desk was customarily littered with grammars and readers and literary works in foreign tongues.

He seemed to be a man of deep convictions, backed with a rare courage and self-sacrifice, but tempered with broad-mindedness and moderation. During the period in question, at least, his demands were moderate: Kurdish autonomy within the Iranian state. He professed to share the view of many Kurds that since they were members of the same Iranian racial family as the Persians proper, there was no reason why they could not form the same combination as did the ancient Medes and Persians. Qazi himself thought the Kurds were the descendants of the Medes, and liked to give his own etymology of Mahabad — "abode of the Medes."

Yet it would be impossible to deny that he and his followers also held pan-Kurdish aspirations and hoped to make Mahabad the center of Kurdish culture and the Kurdish nationalist movement, replacing Syria and Suleimania, its centers at the present time. Great efforts were being made to put Kurdish education on a sound footing. At first Kurdish teachers had to translate from Persian textbooks orally in the classroom, but shortly before the fall of the Kurdish Republic, textbooks in Kurdish had been printed for the primary grades. In addition to a newspaper and a political monthly periodical, both called *Kurdistan*, there were published two primarily literary magazines, *Hawar* and *Hilal*.[10] All of these were printed on a press presented by the Red Army to

[10] A number of other Kurdish periodicals had been published during the Komala period, such as *Kolanda* and notably *Nishtiman*, official organ of the party, which bore a picture of Saladin on the cover and circulated in Iraq as well as Iran.

10cJohnson G-3 (no date) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Iraq

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J. C. A. Johnson

An replica of the Pitdale rider on his favourite mare. Among the Kurds an agha holds the position of a feudal baron, offering in the main the protection of armed guards and receiving in return service from. He will always ride a mare in preference to a horse because it is gentler and more manageable. Pedigree horses are kept by the rich for breeding purposes; the others are used as pack animals.

10:Johnson G-3 (no date) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Iraq

square yard of uncultivated ground around the town is used for this game. Those who cannot find space in other parts run up and down the streets playing football.

The social system of the Kurds is essentially feudal. Up to recent times no man could prosper or even feel safe unless under the protection of a powerful agha, whose armed retainers guarded the miskin (serfs) from any who might attempt to tyrannise the village. In return for this the agha exercised an overlordship, collecting a percentage of the crops, a fee for marriages, and other taxes. He called out the villagers to fight an enemy when required, and was generally in the position of a feudal baron of ancient England.

An agha used his family as the basis of his power. He produced as many sons as possible, who would be loyal to him in an extremity, and put each in charge of a village, or group of villages, to unite them in the common cause when necessary. If sufficiently powerful he might bring other villages under his control by the simple expedient of annexing them from less powerful protectors. Thus in many Kurdish tribes there is no blood relationship between the aghas and the miskēn, but the aghas are of a common descent.

Another important feature in the social system is the shaikhs. Among the Arabs the term 'shaikh' signifies a tribal chief but in Kurdistan a shaikh is a holy man. Certain shaikhly families have acquired the title because they claim descent from the Prophet Mohammed, in which case it corresponds to the title of *seyyid* among other Mohammedan peoples; other shaikhs are holy men, but do not claim such ancestry. Not unnaturally the former class is the more influential and powerful.

It is unfortunate that a number of the shaikhs have not contented themselves with the religious welfare of the people. Like the priestly class throughout the world, they have at times used religious influence to increase material power, and become analogous to powerful tribal

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Iraq

Quite understand how men born and bred in this village under the eye of their shaikh could not but regard him as possessing superhuman powers.

In modern Iraq the power of the shaikhs and aghas has been curtailed. The villager still works under his agha as the owner of the land—the only one, in fact, who is competent to organize and supervise the work of the village; but the simplest villager now realizes that all the power of his agha or holiness of his shaikh will avail him little should he unwisely be persuaded to act contrary to the law.

Certain individual Iraqis who cannot claim tribal ancestry talk glibly of "breaking up the tribes" and "exterminating the aghas" as has been done in some other countries, but on the whole the Iraq government treats the matter with greater foresight and seeks mainly to 'break' those chiefs who use their influence against the government.

[p. 393(c)]

4s Wilson G-3 (no date) 1937 MHI Iraq MHI
Iraq Bedouin MHI
Kurd MHI

B 619 558 178 461 a severe slump in the camel market. Slowly and very reluctantly the bedouin are turning to cultivation and feel themselves immeasurably lowered in the process. Strangely enough, they are also to be found in greasy overalls, working on the rigs of the Mosul Oil Companies. In this work they do not lose caste as they do if they become cultivators.

B 6a3 Shaikh Ajil al Yawar is the paramount Shaikh of the 'Iraqi Shammar. He is an outstanding personality possessing a fine presence and a wonderful charm of manner. With singular astuteness he has managed to control his tribesmen, keep on the right side of successive governments and at the same time amass a considerable fortune for himself. During recent years his figure has perhaps suffered somewhat from the use of motor-cars instead of riding a fiery Arab steed or liver-shaking "dhillool" (trotting camel).

Turkomans

I 173 162 Leaving the Arabs, we come to the Turkomans. They are the remnants of ancient immigration and are to be found in Tel Affar town between Mosul and Sinjar and in a string of villages across to Altun Keupri and Kirkuk. Arbil is also largely a Turkoman town. The village of Nainawa, the ancient Nineveh, just across the Tigris from Mosul, is Turkoman. In a mosque built on unexcavated Assyrian remains it contains the reputed tomb of the prophet Jonah. The mosque is also said to contain a portion of the vertebræ of the whale!

Kurds

I 162 K 101 144 619 Next we come to the Kurds, who form by far the majority of the population of the mountain areas and who are also to be found in a large number of villages well south of the mountains. The Kurds are Aryan in origin and Sunni Muslims by religion. The mountain Kurds and in fact all the mountaineers of Kurdistan bear a close resemblance to the Scottish clans of two hundred years ago. They are still organized on a tribal or clan basis, though the increase in government control and influence is naturally tending to destroy this organization and undermine the power of the chiefs, or Aghas as they are called. Aghas may, however, still be seen proceeding to town or market with a "tail" of armed henchmen and even a pipebearer. The Kurdish pipebearer is, however, concerned with the Agha's tobacco pipe and not with music. Kurdish music is nevertheless played on a pipe

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